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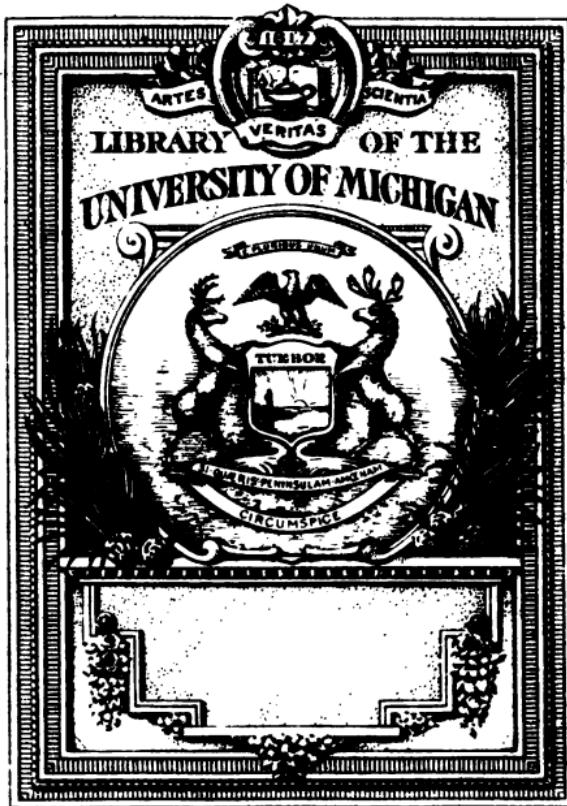
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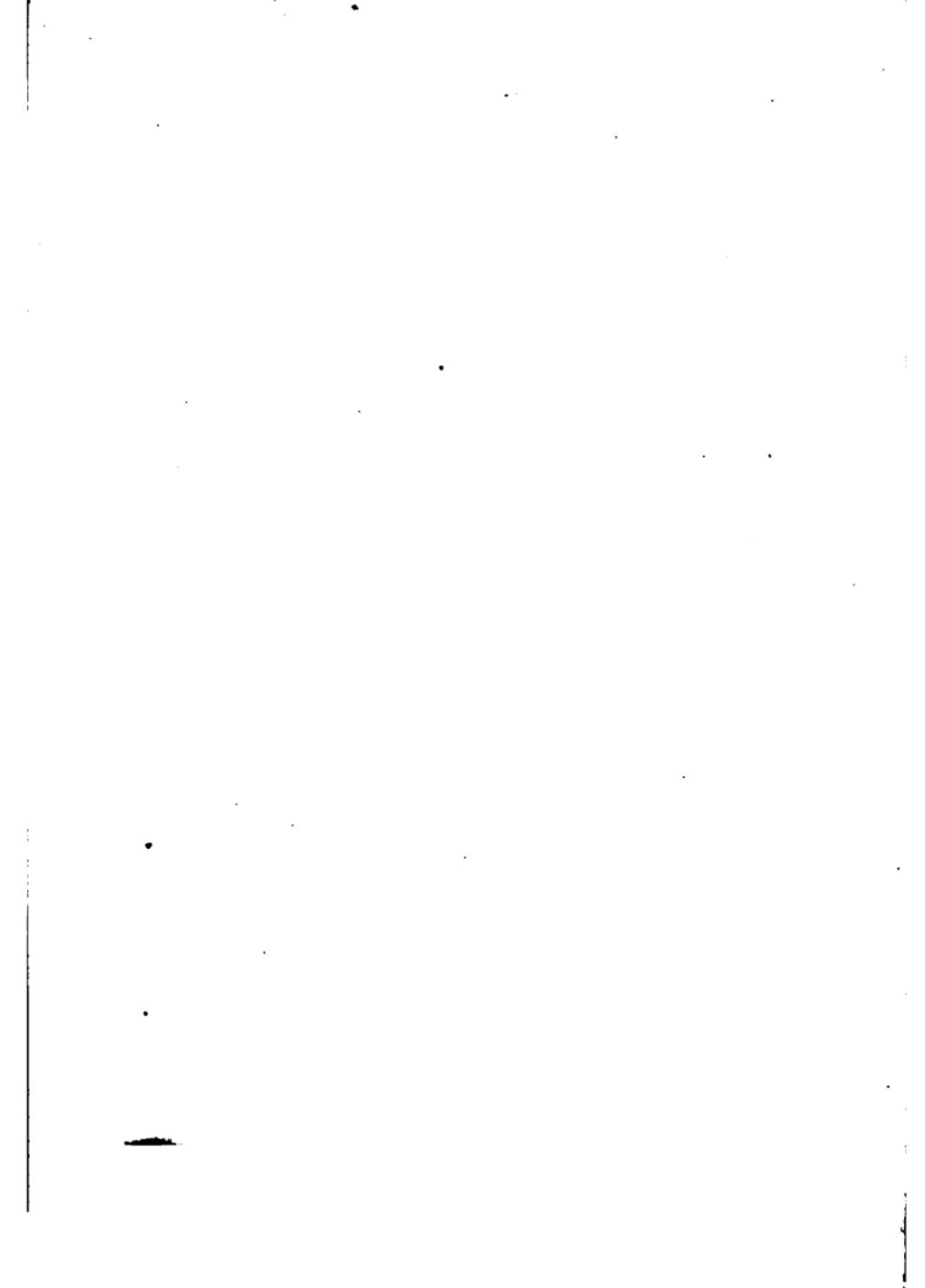
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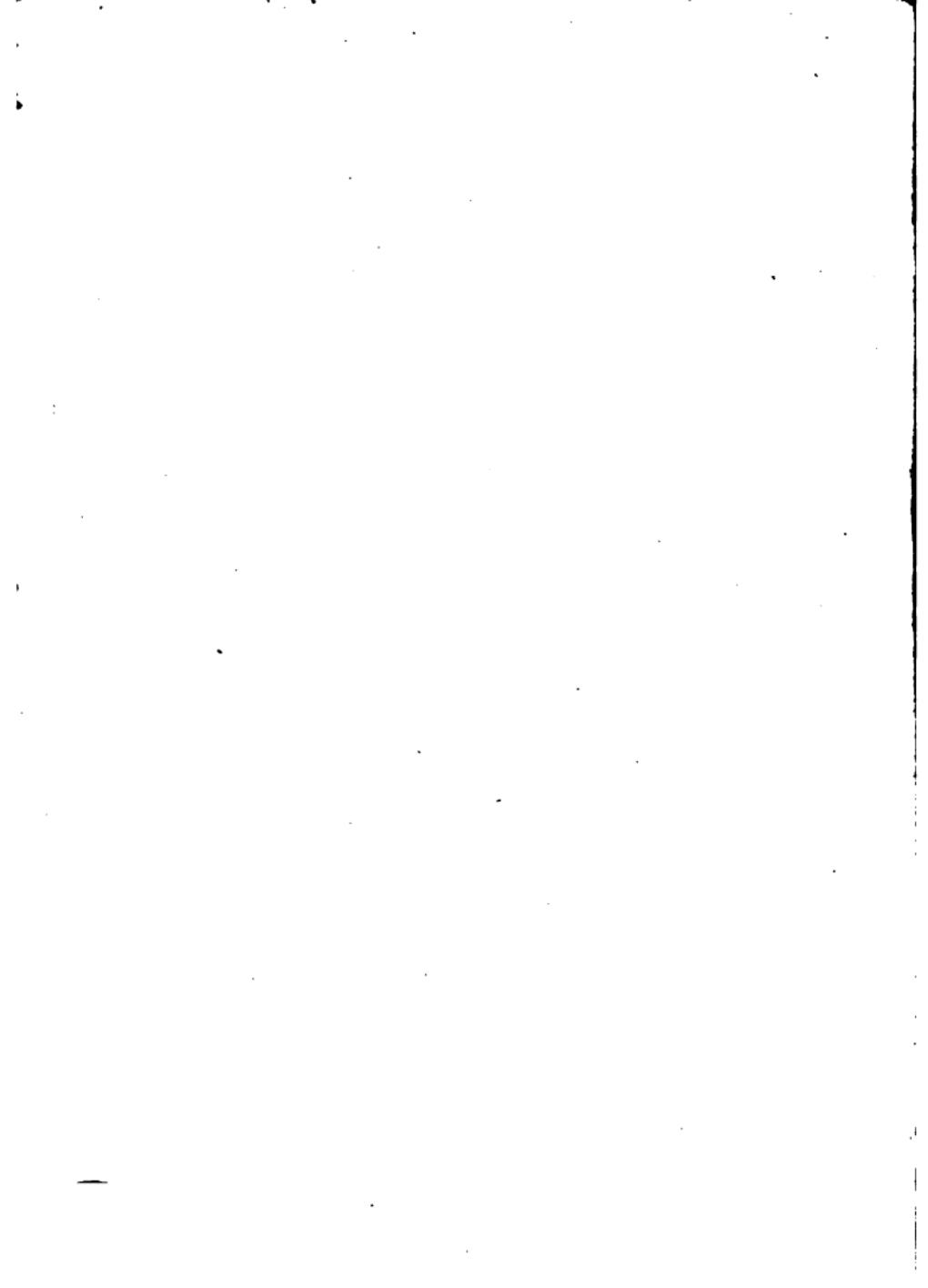
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# *Detmold: A Romance.*

By W. H. BISHOP.



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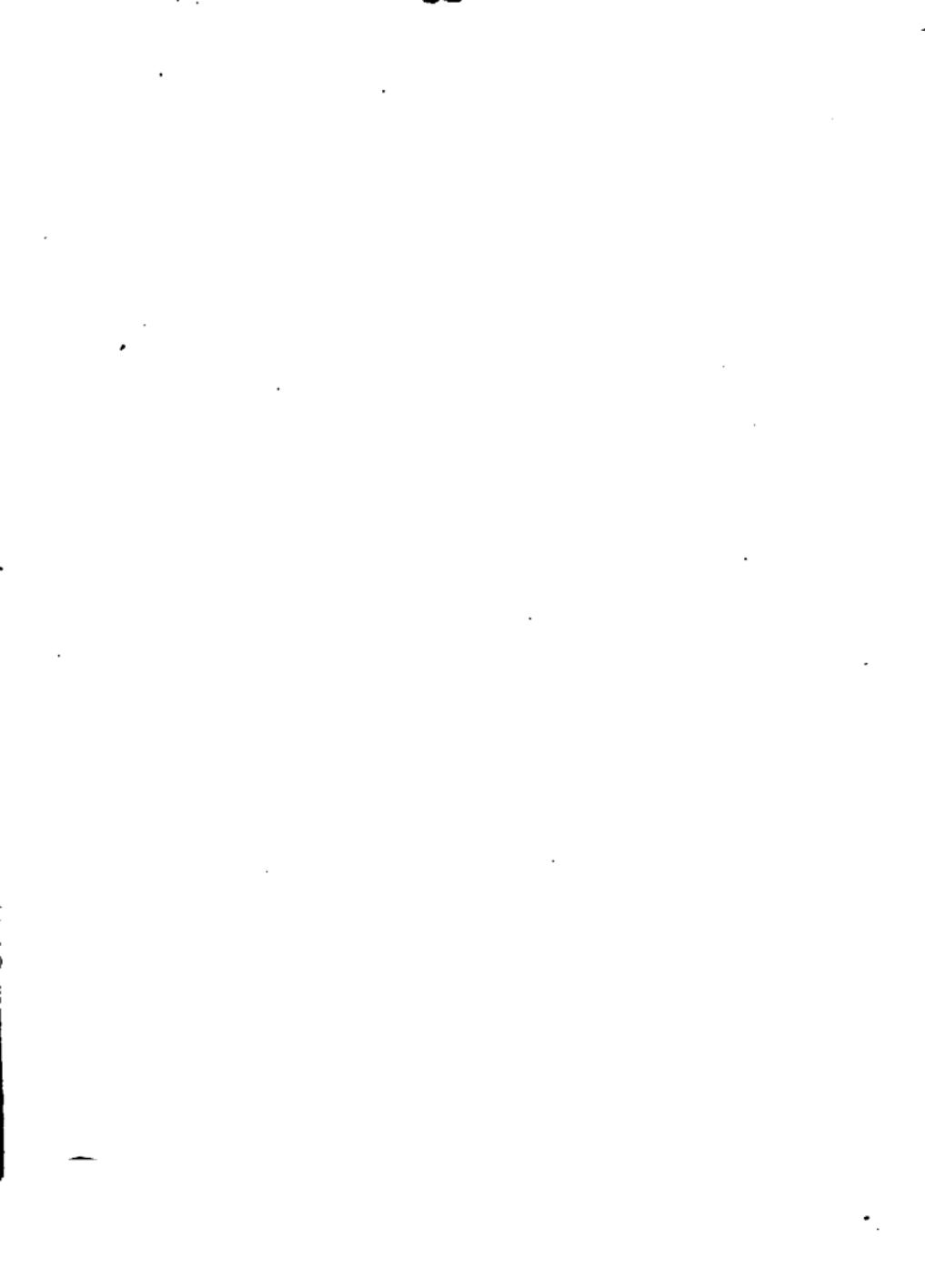
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## DETMOLD: A ROMANCE.

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### I.

#### A PLAY WITH REAL SCENERY.

HE late train from the westward arrives at Verona towards eleven o'clock. It is drawn by locomotives named the Titian, the Sansovino, or the Paul Veronese, yet if it be a sultry night the traveler hardly finds himself the more comfortable for these attractive designations. It was on a sultry night in the early part of June that a young gentleman alighted from this train and placed himself, almost the only passenger, in a long omnibus, which bore him away into the heart of the city.

His countenance wore a petulant expression, as though he felt that he had a right to complain at the discomforts to which he was being subjected. There was a white muslin scarf with barred ends twisted about his hat, a field glass was slung

over his shoulder, and he had a general aspect of having lately come out of Switzerland,—as indeed he had, by way of the Simplon Pass.

The long omnibus crossed a bridge, rolled in and out of numerous dark streets and up the Corso to its narrowest part, and paused before the Torre d'Oro al Gran Parigi. The traveler made his arrangements hurriedly at the bureau of the hotel. He did not wait to be shown to his room, but grumbled at the heat and asked to be directed where he could get some cooling refreshment immediately. In the street he pushed his hat upon the back of his head with a breath of partial relief, and at the end of the block turned into a small passage which leads under a statue-crowned archway to the Café Dante, in the Piazza de' Signori.

Business for the night was nearly over at the Café Dante. Most of the little tables that usually stand upon the pavement had been taken in. There were still a few patrons sipping ices, or smoking and conversing in quiet tones. The new-comer threw himself into a chair, and a polite waiter snatched a napkin and ran out from the interior to know what the *signore* desired to command. The *signore* commanded a certain ice, which was exhausted for the evening. The substitute brought to him, whatever it was, did

not appear to be to his liking. In an endeavor to obtain something else, which his slight acquaintance with the language did not enable him to make sufficiently clear, he was obliged to go to explain his demand to a more accomplished attendant within. While he did so he stood for some moments in a strong light. As he came out a gentleman who had been observing his movements with interest stepped forward to meet him.

“Pardon me if I am wrong,” said he, “but I think you must be Morris Hyson.”

“I certainly am,” replied the other; “and dark as it is I have not the slightest difficulty in making out that you are Louis Detmold. I am extremely glad to see you. How in the world do you happen to be here? I had no idea that you were within six thousand miles of this out-of-the-way place. When did you leave Lakeport?”

“Only in March,” answered Detmold. “I am taking a sort of course of study in my line,—drawing buildings, and so on. These Lombard cities are full of material. I find this one especially interesting. But let us sit down. Have you ordered? You seemed to have some difficulty.”

“Yes, I did; but I think I have now made

myself understood. I want some seltzer water, wine, and a little syrup and ice. I mix them together into a kind of imitation of our American soda-water. I can recommend it as a tolerable beverage, at least when you are half parched to death with thirst, as I am at this very moment. I have just come, and am sticky and covered with dust. I did not stop an instant at my hotel. What a suffocating thing it is to drop down into this Italian country, after the Alps ! ”

“ It is not so bad here after you are a little used to it, though I believe the weather is warmer than usual for the time of year,” said Detmold.

The desired refreshment was brought ; the two friends chose one of the tables remote from the door, and fell into easy conversation.

The Piazza de’ Signori is a small paved court, oblong in shape, and surrounded by ancient buildings. One seems lowered into another century as if into a well. There are prisons and palaces on either hand, somber walls dashed with color, arcades, balconies, and statues. Little bridges, with flowers hanging from their parapets, span the openings into it at the height of the third and fourth stories. At one side is a Renaissance palace, carved, gilded, and as fanciful amid the grave solidity of its surroundings as a

piece of jewelry. A great battlemented tower of brick, with bands of marble interspaced, rises from the municipal buildings. In every adjacent nook is a curious arcaded staircase, or tomb, or shrine, or red marble well-curb with wrought-iron tackle. In front of the café is a fresh white marble statue of Dante, erected on the five hundredth anniversary of his birth. It has not yet the mellow tones of the place, but the grand severity of that hooded form and face make it congruous with any antiquity.

“The last time I saw you, Detmold,” said Hyson, “you were working like a beaver for architectural customers, and, if my recollection is right, not getting very many. You gave me some account of the eccentricities of your Lakeport Crœsuses and your efforts to capture them. I judge that you have had better success in the mean time.”

“Well, no, not much,” said Detmold. “Still I have made a beginning. Lakeport does not exactly hunger and thirst after the fine arts. It likes a good deal of solid bricks and mortar and cast-iron, and considers one device in the way of ornament about as good as another. The Crœsuses are pretty hard to capture. I don’t know whether I was too young, too high-priced, or too finical. They have come nearer capturing me.

I have done things there that would drive my New York masters into convulsions."

" Such as what?"

" Oh, sham classic,—wooden pillars, and so on, sanded over to look like stone. I had to."

" That is pretty bad, I suppose."

" Execrable!"

" It is rough, isn't it?" said Hyson, sympathetically. " Now, you have got an immense taste for such things, you know. Why, you ought to be — you ought to be" — selecting the largest buildings he could think of as a measure of his appreciation of his friend's capability — " the architect of the capitol at Albany or the New York post-office."

" Thank you," said Detmold, laughing ; " you are a most discriminating judge. Of course I have not given up entirely. I have got to go back and work for a living. But I had a little money that came to me unexpectedly, and I determined to come and make this trip — to which I have always been attracted — while I had some enthusiasm left. I can get considerable good out of it in the way of my profession, sketching and reading, but after all I suppose it is only a species of opium-eating."

" Opium-eating? Not at all ; nothing of the sort," objected Hyson. " You are adding some-

thing continually to your business capital. All this picturesque trumpery will be money in your pocket some day."

"It makes a man bold, for one thing," said Detmold. "There is nothing in the way of design he ought to feel afraid to attempt after going back. Almost every thing conceivable in shape and contrivance is to be found here, already in actual use. What do you think of coupled columns tied up at the center into a braided knot, as though they were flexible, the whole cut out of one piece of marble?"

"I should say they would be pretty stunning," said Hyson, apparently thinking that the feat was presented for his admiration.

"I do not fancy them myself," said Detmold, coolly, "but you can see such in the crypt at San Zeno."

"Then, another thing," said Hyson, continuing, "your Lakeport barbarians can not remain so apathetic always; the tide of Eastern transit and fashion is continually sweeping through, and must have its effect sooner or later. But even if they should, you can pull up stakes and dig out, can't you? There is certainly room enough and taste enough and money enough in America for such a fellow as you to be furnished with opportunities to put his ideas in practice, no matter how high-toned they are."

"Yes," assented Detmold, hesitatingly, "I suppose that might be done; but I have had reasons why I rather wished to remain at Lakeport."

"Oh, you had reasons! It seems to me I recollect something further of them. Was it perhaps a blonde reason, with a sweet expression and a puzzling coolness of manners? I was inclined to think that a very good reason myself, the winter I spent at Lakeport. Miss Starfield — Miss Alice Starfield — her name was. And, now that I think of it and put this and that together, it occurs to me very forcibly that I made the excursion to Chamouny with her and her party not over two weeks ago. Perhaps our motives were a little mixed,—eh, Detmold? Perhaps it was something more than Lombard-Gothic chimney-pots, and nondescript columns that tie themselves up into double bow-knots, that brought us across several thousand leagues of land and sea."

"Perhaps it was," said Detmold, with a sigh.

"Probably it is no news that she and her party, her father, mother, and a rather oldish young lady,—Miss Lonsdale, or some such name,—are coming to this very place. They ought to be somewhere in the vicinity now."

Detmold remained silent.

"Mr. Starfield is concerning himself a good

deal about the silk culture and manufacturing. It seems to me that he intends to go into it. I believe he has been made assignee or has bought an interest in some establishment that has not run very successfully hitherto. He thinks of bringing out workmen from here, and so on. I understood him to say that he had business with some Verona parties which might keep him here a month."

"With the Castelbarcos, most likely," said Detmold. "They are correspondents and old acquaintances of his. They have a large factory here, and another somewhere in the country. There are two of them in the business, and both have been in America. I used to go to school with Antonio, the son, at Wardham, where I prepared for college."

"That is well worth mentioning; I hope you cultivate him. An indigenous acquaintance like that is no trivial advantage here, I can tell you. It exasperates me beyond measure when I think of it, how we skim along through these countries, meeting nobody but truckling landlords, waiters, and grisettes, or some denationalized specimens who know more about other countries than their own; and we find out nothing at all of what the people who live here are like."

"Yes, I cultivate him a little. I have dined

with him, and he has dined with me at my restaurant in the Piazza Brà. I have been through his factory and at his club and at his home. It is a very odd place, — the last."

"Old palace?"

"Old palace, of course. It has crests and armorial bearings in profusion. The family claim noble descent, and assert a legitimate title to it in some way, although it has only recently come into their hands by purchase, out of the profits of their business. The old lady, especially, is as stately as a marchioness, and thoroughly imbued with her aristocratic traditions."

"You can introduce me, I suppose," said Hyson. "I have no doubt I can get some assistance from them in my own pursuit."

"Have you a pursuit too?" said Detmold, in some surprise; "I had supposed you were simply one of the great army of pleasure-seekers."

"You do me wrong, my dear friend. You see before you one engaged in an enterprise of pith and moment. What is more, there is money in it. It is the Paradise Valley."

"The Paradise Valley?" said Detmold, with a strong rising inflection.

"How do you like the name? Wait till you see how settlers will flock in to a title like that. But do not be alarmed. It is not a 'New Eden.'

Nobody is to be imposed upon. You will hear of no Paradise Valley farms in the market until the whole is made fully as good as its appellation. The Paradise Valley is to be irrigated."

"I do not yet understand."

"But you shall. I am opening the channels of my intelligence to the fullest head of information that can be run into them on the subject of irrigation, in order to improve my California property. I had even thought of taking a turn at the hydraulic university at Pavia, but the language is too strongly against me. I have seen already what there is in the south of France, and have spent a month looking over the canals of Piedmont."

He arose, stretched himself a little, and knocked the ashes off his cigar. A shambling *cicerone*, who had been hovering in the vicinity for some time, evidently considered the present as good an opportunity of offering his services as was likely to occur. He shuffled forward, and with a suggestive wave of his arm, intended to embrace the objects of interest in the vicinity, began, "Dante, Signori, molto bello. La Loggia, Signori" —

"No, for heaven's sake!" cried Hyson, impatiently. "At home," he resumed, sitting down, "I have never been credited with any

great amount of original energy. I have tried various things, you see, since leaving college. For instance, I set up as a lawyer, but so few clients came that my office boy was ashamed of me and struck. But about a year ago I took a notion to run out to California and look at a piece of land my father left me, with other property. He took it for a debt, and none of us had ever seen it. I looked at it, and made up my mind about it immediately. The situation is one of the finest you can imagine,—a valley and tract of the foot-hills of the Sierra Nevada. About once in five years the country is beautiful,—luxuriant vegetation — climate — glorious view, everything. The rest of the time it is a perfect little Sahara. You plant your grain ; it comes up, may be, six inches high, turns sickly and yellow, and that is the end of it. Sometimes there is not a living blade of grass, and yet the land is excellent. What does it want? Nothing but water. There is plenty of it, too, if it is only rightly managed. The mountains behind constitute a great natural reservoir ; they are nine thousand feet high, and an average depth of fourteen feet of snow falls upon them. More than that, the mountains are full of gold and silver, scarcely touched. Why? No water, again. I propose to have a series of storage tanks arranged back in the mountain

gorges to sluice my portion of this little Golconda, and then bring down the same water to support gardens, orchards, and vineyards below."

"It is a splendid project," said Detmold. "You will make a national reputation."

"I shall make a pile of money, which is more to the purpose. Do you know what irrigated land sells for? At Valencia, in Spain, it brings from seven hundred to nine hundred dollars an acre; near Murcia some has been sold for twenty-five hundred dollars an acre, dry land close by being worth only one hundred and fifty dollars. Look at the crops you get! The grass meadows at Milan yield seven times a year, and turn out sometimes seventy-five tons an acre. In California, where this thing has been tried a little already, you can get from fifty to eighty bushels of wheat and five crops of grass. But you are not helping yourself. How do you like my mixture?"

"I believe I prefer the wine unmixed. They have given us Val Policella, the best of this section. One can taste the perfume of grape blossoms in it. It is too good to adulterate."

"How do you stand this wine for breakfast, dinner, supper, and lunch, and between times?" asked Hyson. "When I first arrived it used to keep me in an exalted state all the time, like too much waltzing. Now I don't mind it. A con-

vivial acquaintance of mine at home, named Shannon, has a theory that while people who go abroad think they are improved by history, the fine arts, and the contemplation of strange manners and institutions, in reality it is the generous wine they drink that constitutes the whole benefit. However, he is an incorrigible old toper himself, which creates a prejudice against his views. Where do you stop, here? At my hotel, perhaps?"

"No, I am economizing. I have an apartment in the third *piano* of a house near the Grazzini Palace,—indeed, in a wing of it,—and I dine where it suits me, from day to day."

"If they do not treat me well at this Tower of Gold or Tower of Babel, or whatever it is, I shall join you," said Hyson.

"You will remain at Verona for some time; then?"

"Until I have seen as much of Lombardy as of Piedmont. I understand that the canals in this locality are not as extensive or scientific as some others, but the conditions seem to me more like what I have at home,—foot-hills as well as plain, dry and wet cultivation mixed. For my purposes Verona is Hyson City, the Adige the King's River, and the Adriatic will do duty for Tulare Lake."

The deep bell of the Palazzo Vecchio tolled midnight. The white figure of Dante in front rose upon its pedestal like a ghost. The rays of a late-rising moon touched the row of statues upon the Loggia. The trailing flowers upon the little bridges were silhouetted against a sky full of stars. The last guests had strolled into the *café* to settle their reckoning.

“How like a theater it is!” said Hyson. “I can hardly believe that it is real.”

“Perfectly!” said Detmold. “It might be Booth’s, or the Academy of Music.”

“Here are all the properties,—flats, drops, wings, exits, and entrances. One half expects this to roll back on squeaking wheels and give place to the drawing-room scene; or to the garden scene, with its cabbage-roses sprawling over the terrace balustrade, and its verdant banks of green baize; or to the forest scene, with the foreground trees cut out and toppling whenever a draught comes through. This is the night scene. There ought to be gloomy rascals slouching about the archways, with poniards under their cloaks, or fellows in red and yellow cotton-velvet, and corked eyebrows, snorting about and fencing with each other. ‘Minion, where is the juke? Hold back and let me look on thee again, Lorenzo.’”

In a whimsical mood he started to his feet and

thrust about with his walking-stick as if it had been a rapier, or drew his shoulders well-nigh over his head to convey meanings of mysterious villainy. The hovering cicerone retreated in alarm.

“ Nay, Barberigo, stay ! ” declaimed the young man, continuing his posturing. “ These stones shall be me resting-place. Here shall me soul br-ood o’er its misery.”

“ Look out,” said Detmold, laughing ; “ I don’t know what kind of police we have here, but they will certainly not recognize the customs of their country as you portray them. They may make us trouble.”

“ Touch me not, prison miscreants ! The illustrious Lady Foscari bids me to an audience.”

“ Stop, *stop*, Morris ! ” cried Detmold, who had arisen in some alarm, placing his hand upon his shoulder. “ It will really not do to make such a disturbance.”

“ Away ! ” mouthed Hyson. “ Me galley floats within a bow-shot of the Riva de’ Schiavoni.” Then, dropping his antics, he thrust his arm good-naturedly through Detmold’s and drew him along. The few persons who remained in the *café* had begun to gather at the door in astonishment. Among them was a gentleman whom Detmold recognized and stopped to greet,

as they passed, as the younger Castelbarco. He introduced Hyson, and the two were introduced in turn to Castelbarco's companion, a young officer in a handsome uniform of blue and silver. After an amount of ceremonious hand-shaking and touching of hats, the party separated. The Italians were scrupulously polite, but regarded Hyson with puzzled expressions.

"You are just as you used to be," said Detmold. "Advancing years have not got the upper hand of your old spirits."

"Oh, yes, they have, I assure you," answered the other. "I am usually as serious as a funeral. I have not cut so many capers before for an age."

Detmold accompanied his friend to the gate of his hotel. Before they parted it was arranged that he should return and breakfast with him in the morning.

"I suppose I ought to do a little sight-seeing before I settle down to business," said Hyson. "You must not let me interfere with your occupations, but you can tell me what is worth looking at, and I can go about by myself and take it in."

"We will take a little turn together, to-morrow," said Detmold; "I can spare you a day."

"And — by the way," observed Hyson, holding ajar one of the great doors of the *porte*

*cochère*, the bolt of which had been drawn in answer to his ring, "I hope I was not offensive in my flippant mention of Miss Starfield. I flattered myself that I divined what your feelings were in that quarter at the time referred to."

"They are not very different now," said Detmold, in a gloomy tone. "How did she look when you saw her?" he continued, hesitatingly, poking the stones with his stick.

"As pretty as ever and a great deal more animated. Whether it was the general excitement of travel, or the mountain air, or the beneficent influence of the wine for breakfast, she had got rid of a good deal of that stiffness — whether haughtiness or timidity I never could tell — that used to make her so hard to comprehend. She laughed and sang, and made some Eton boys run races by the side of the diligence, while she conversed them out of breath. She even climbed short cuts for flowers with your humble servant. She is very charming, Detmold. If I were not so tough in these matters, and if I did not know what I do about your claims, there is no telling what a spectacle even I might be capable of making of myself there."

"I do not know that I have any particular claims," said Detmold; "she is her own property."

“ I thought it was better than that.”

“ No,—but I will tell you about it some time. Good night.” And he walked away, while the heavy doors of the Torre d’Oro clanged behind the new arrival.

## II.

## ALICE.

**F**N Verona scarcely any streets are straight ; none preserve a uniform width throughout ; no two are parallel ; hardly two blocks are of the same length. Irregular alleys, or *vicolas*, and smaller alleys still (*vicoletti*) bore their way into the thick mass of buildings. Over them project the eaves of low-pitched roofs, showing the scalloped edges of red earthen tiles. In these narrow streets are stuccoed palaces frescoed outside in neutral tints. The flat wall simulates below perhaps a massive rusticated basement, with projecting quoins, in the Palladian style ; above, pilasters, balconies, windows, and awnings, shaded in correct perspective from one point of view, but of course toppling and false from all others. This spurious gray and sepia embellishment, in which there is no illusion, is all that remains of a gorgeous fashion that once

covered domestic buildings with fanciful pictures and brilliant colors. A trace of the ancient style may still be seen in the Piazza Erbe. There last judgments and mythological scenes and figures, in tolerable preservation, some designed by no less a hand than Mantegna's, still ornament the tall façades. Many a famous artist did not disdain in this way to recompense his entertainers or show his regard for a friendly house.

At eight in the morning, after a couple of hours' work, Detmold put in his pocket the sketch-book which was his unfailing companion, and took his way to the Torre d'Oro. The sun was in an unclouded sky, and the protection of the strongly defined shadows beneath the buildings was already grateful. In the oblong, irregular Piazza Erbe a busy traffic was in progress. The market people and their goods were sheltered under white, tent-like umbrellas. A battered statue, the genius of the city, familiarly known as Madonna Verona, arose in their midst like a tutelary divinity. Below it a fountain, which has a history of a thousand years, splashed into a copious basin, at which they freshened their vegetables. The Maffei Palace, now the fashionable shopping-place of Verona, closes the piazza. In front of it is a tall pillar which once, like those in the Piazzetta at Venice, sustained the lion of

St. Mark, as an emblem of Venetian domination.

Hyson had not yet risen when Detmold arrived. He came down complaining of want of sleep on account of the heat. His room opened on an interior court where jets of gas flamed all night. His first proceeding was to make the secretary assign him more endurable quarters. At breakfast an English commercial traveler, who dropped his h's, endeavored to enter into conversation with the young men. He assured them that he always made it a point to stop at the best hotels. He asked them what line they were in, as if they had been fellow tradesmen. Hyson laughed, and said that he was interested in fertilizers, and his friend largely in paint stuffs. The commercial traveler said it was a fine farming country, and that the Cadburys of Birmingham were the best makers of paint stuffs in the trade, and he knew them very well. But Detmold was disgusted, and recurred to this incident as they rode together in a hired cab on their tour of inspection. It was a kind of shock to him that persons should come to Verona on any business which was not largely one of sentiment.

"As for me," said Hyson, "I was disillusioned on my first trip. I came over the year of the Paris Exposition, you know. I had an idea

that Europe was a kind of stem-winding panorama, moving to the music of a melodeon. The people I conceived as abstractions of burnt sienna, Chinese white, and cobalt, forever leaning up against vine-clad archways, or washing clothes under striped awnings in azure lakes. But in fact the sentimental element is in a small minority. People here have got to be hard, vulgar, calculating, and tricky, and scramble for their bread and butter like ourselves. They leave little patches of antiquity railed off here and there to be stared at by loungers, but it is not the business of *their* lives, by any means. Nothing is curious any longer. Everything is exported and imported. You find the same sort of knickknacks in a shop at Perugia or Civita Vecchia as in a dollar store at Green Bay. The breath of the locomotive dissolves the peasant costumes and manners and customs like frost on a window pane. English cockneys, like the one we have seen, go over the road every thirty days, and sell goods at Bruges, Venice, Cairo, and probably at Bagdad and in the vale of Cashmere, just as an American 'drummer' jumps off and on with his samples at all the stations between Chicago and Little Rock. I should like to know why they should not. Distances are nothing like as great, and customers are a hundred times as plenty."

"To imaginative people," said Detmold, "antiquity and the foreign, being so different from the ordinary circumstances of life, are an approximation to the ideal. When this resource is cut off, when we have all traveled around the world three or four times apiece, and a glare of daylight is let into everything, what is going to be left to us?"

"One thing at a time," replied Hyson. "When we get through with what there is, no doubt we shall be furnished with more. Perhaps some method will be devised for effecting a close connection with the planets."

The young men rolled down through the market piazza to the gray Roman amphitheater in the Piazza Brà on trackways of stone, laid to facilitate the passage of vehicles. They traversed the length of the Corso, with its Roman arch and its palaces by San Micheli, passed out upon the bridges below which water-wheels were turning in the current, and glanced into churches and museums and up at the battlements of an old mediæval castle by a battlemented bridge. They viewed the city from the hill of San Pietro, the ancient stronghold of old Dietrich of Bern, and from amid the neglected cypresses of the Giusti garden.

It is a thick, rich city, full of spires and tow-

ers. The Adige, cold and swift from the glaciers, passes through its glowing mass like a marrow of ice. Over the undulations of the surrounding heights sweep modern bastions and lunettes, and battlemented walls surviving from the Middle Ages. The travelers paused here and there at outlying *osteria* to take a light refreshment of cakes and wine. The wide boulevards of the suburbs glared. The foliage peeping above the inhospitable garden walls was parched and dusty. The visitors turned back among the shadows of the tall houses for relief.

Hyson was sufficiently appreciative of the whole, but Detmold enjoyed it with a passion. Architecture that depends for its effect upon form alone has the gravity of sculpture; the Lombard-Gothic, with its Byzantine affiliations, is like painting. This quality of the quaint city permeated the young architect in every fiber. He could have embraced the red marble lions that supported the columns of the porches. Bathed in such a glow of light and color, they seemed almost to have a benign warmth and vitality of their own.

Towards four o'clock they crossed the Ponte di Pietra, and turned again into the Corso near Santa Anastasia and Hyson's hotel. They dismissed the conveyance and stepped in to enjoy

for a moment the coolness of the church before going to dine. Its exterior, unfinished since the thirteenth century, is of rough brick, spotted and time-stained. The interior is such a surprise as when one discovers a heart of precious crystals within a clumsy geode. The thick columns separating the numerous aisles, and the series of sculptured and frescoed chapels, are all of the richest materials. There is an elegant simplicity in the details. Bands of flat, painted ornament follow and accent the construction in place of the uneasy moldings of the North. The pavement is a mosaic of soft tones, white, red, and bluish-gray. To our friends, who raised the curtain at the doorway, after the long dazzle of the day, the church had for a moment the obscurity of twilight.

An elderly gentleman, with his hands behind him, stood in the nave at a distance, directing his attention to some feature of the ceiling which a younger man was pointing out. Nearer the entrance, two ladies, guide-book in hand, were inspecting an elaborate altar. Detmold's heart gave a great throb. He was sensible of a gracious presence in the church, more pervading than its impression of artistic splendor or religious awe. It was Alice.

"We are in luck," said Hyson, with animation. "Here are the Starfields, now."

The ladies turned at the same moment, and the recognition was mutual. Miss Alice Starfield, the taller of the two, was above the middle height. Her expression was marked by sweetness and candor. There appeared also in it a trace of haughtiness that might have been merely an indication of reserve, and at times of archness that was a little derisive. It would hardly have been safe, therefore, to trust to its element of sweetness as an indication of perfectly tame and unvaried amiability. Her light brown hair was dry and profuse. Some careless strands of it strayed over the forehead. She wore a hat looped up at one side, in which was a gray and white wing. The prevailing tones of her costume were gray, but there were delicate touches of color disposed about it which gave to the whole an intangible bloom.

No one would have gathered from anything in the demeanor of Alice that the relation of Detmold to her was that of a rejected suitor who had recently left her in a mood of bitterness and despair. She greeted him as pleasantly — with just the faintest shade of inquiry in her glance — as his companion. But the remembrance which was so momentous to Detmold produced in him, as the only means of concealing his agitation at this unexpected meeting, an unusual reserve. He

thought wildly of attempting to carry it off cavalierly, to impose upon her the idea that he was no more distressed than herself at what had happened ; but he had neither the disingenuousness to belittle the sincerity of his passion, nor the flow of spirits at command to play the part successfully. He wondered at her lightness and gayety. The situation which involves the happiness of two lifetimes seemed to him to have the seriousness of a kind of sacrificial rites. He could have expected the participants to walk apart in pensive attitudes, as if amid colonnades of Egyptian sphinxes. He watched the countenance of Alice to see if he could not detect some expression of relenting, or even of constraint, — some trace of feeling corresponding to his own, upon which renewed hope might be based. There was nothing but blooming animation. If anything, there was an increase of self-possession and reconciliation to herself involved in the presence of a lover who thought the ground she walked on fit to worship. Not that it was a conscious reveling in her power ; but the incense of such admiration can hardly fail to intoxicate a little involuntarily. A companion so much in her presence as Miss Lonsdale noted a brighter luster in her eyes and a heightened color in her cheeks.

The heart of Alice beat faster for the meeting. Was it pleasurable or unwelcome? She was deliberating, while she talked, how one ought to treat a rejected suitor whom one perhaps likes well enough as a friend, and whom one has rejected in a surprised and agitated moment, because she has never thought of him before as a lover, because she knows him too little, because she is not in haste to marry, and because at any rate time to think of all these things was to be gained by refusal, but none at all by acceptance.

“ You can not have been here long,” said Hyson, “ or we should have known it.”

“ No,” replied Alice ; “ we only arrived from Bergamo a couple of hours ago. Our hotel is close by. As we were not at all tired we ran over to have a glimpse of this delightful church before dinner. Mr. Castelbarco called just as we were starting, and was kind enough to come with us.”

“ Is your hotel the Torre d’Oro?”

“ I think so, — some such name as that.”

“ So much the better,” said Hyson. “ I am there, too. We are going to be neighbors. And how is Mrs. Starfield, with whom I became such good friends on our trip to Chamouny? I hope you have not left her behind.”

“ Oh, no ; mamma is here, but she is so in-

different. She prefers comfort to improvement whenever we let her have her own way in the least."

"We must cure her of that. Leave her to me. I have a method. I shall introduce to you a number of persons whom your mother would not let you marry on any account. They will give you invitations, and Mrs. Starfield will go out as chaperone, every time."

"Please don't," said Alice.

Mr. Starfield now came forward with his companion. It was Antonio, the younger Castelbarco. He was a tall, well-shaped, handsome fellow, with fine eyes and the characteristic silk-like mustache of his countrymen. The father of Alice had a close-trimmed beard beginning to be touched with gray, a keen but kindly eye, and the chary speech and self-poised brusqueness of a successful business man. He gave the impression of taking the antiquities and show articles of travel, in which it was now his duty to manifest an interest, with a good-natured tolerance which was yet not lacking in respect. His habit of thoroughness did not abandon him even here, or suffer him to leave uncomprehended any thing to which he gave his attention. He discerned the purpose and the admirable ingenuity of many of the mediæval devices in which the rest saw

only chaotic picturesqueness. He would purposely mispronounce at times some of the difficult proper names, to enjoy the remonstrances of the young women, who pretended to be very much ashamed of him. In the presence of this keen and disciplined merchant, Detmold felt himself hardly more than an aimless trifler. Hyson, whose present pursuit quite disengaged him of any such sensibility, if he had ever been hampered by it, took Mr. Starfield apart to confer, as between fellow business men, upon the prospects of irrigation.

The glance of Castelbarco followed the soft and engaging figure of Alice as she moved, with undisguised admiration. As often as he could, he advanced to her side, with ingratiating politeness, to explain to her some of the surrounding objects. She responded to his attentions with a graciousness that was the gall of bitterness to Detmold.

Miss Lonsdale and Detmold being thrown together, strolled slowly after the others, the latter, well versed in the details of the place, acting as cicerone.

Miss Lonsdale, a niece of Mrs. Starfield, was a young lady of a year or two beyond thirty. She had some property in her own right; she was well informed, of fine manners, and of an apparently amiable disposition. There was a cold,

somewhat nun-like sweetness in her smile, from which it could be rightly inferred that she had once been pretty, and that she was now devout. She was one of those ladies, proportionably more numerous in the upper than in the lower strata of American society, who, not averse to marriage, and possessed of social advantages and personal attractions which charm those about them, yet wither and grow old without finding partners to complete the harmony of their lives. It may be that young women of wealth and station outnumber young men in parallel circumstances, or that the latter oftener step down to choose than their places are supplied from below in the circle they have left. This is one of the ill adjustments of life, probably some time to be remedied, that countless small cliques and societies are seen revolving monotonously without touching, while in their contact and crossing, if such a thing might be, there would seem to be limitless possibilities. Perhaps even in the whole, if reciprocals could be brought together, there is a supplement for every deficiency and a realization for every ideal.

Miss Lonsdale did not appear to repine that her lot had not been differently fashioned. At her home she devoted herself to enterprises of benevolence. She had given much attention to theological questions, and had passed through

numerous creeds from Presbyterianism to Ritualism, and recently, by a final step, to Catholicism. Like most new converts her devotion was extreme. It was mainly to gratify her sentiment of reverence for the holy places of the new-found church that she had come abroad. She had been at Lourdes, Einsiedeln, Loretto, and other pilgrimage spots, and spoke of them with grave enthusiasm.

Detmold found her conversation interesting, but chiefly, it must be confessed, on account of the incidental mentions it contained of Alice. He kept the conversation at these points as well as he could. He heard of her artistic achievements in the way of taking the likenesses of old ladies, or good-natured waiting-maids, or little beggars hired by the hour. How had she stood the fatigues of the mountains? He was distressed to learn that, although assuming a bravado of athleticism, she had not escaped here and there during her journeys some serious attacks of illness from fatigue and climatic influences. How was she pleased when they met the poet Freiligrath at Wiesbaden? What did he say to her, and what did she say to him? He was devoid of tact in this, and presently perceived Miss Lonsdale flashing at him glances of suspicion, upon which he dropped the subject so precipitately that her suspicions were confirmed.

But he had learned among the rest that the business of Mr. Starfield would probably keep the party at Verona a month, if the weather was endurable; and that while there Alice would endeavor to get permission to pursue some studies in painting at the Museo Civico.

The visitors strolled irregularly in the great church, now massing at the summons of one to note some special feature of interest, then dividing differently and scattering again. Detmold and Castelbarco found themselves together.

"It is a singular man, your friend," said the Italian, indicating Hyson, who stood at a little distance with Alice.

"On account of his antics at the café last night? Oh, you must not mind that; it was only a freak. He is a very sensible fellow, I assure you."

"Perchance so. For a moment myself and my comrade of the evening did esteem him to be *insane*. But how charming is your country-woman, the Signorina Starfield! I did know her as a child, when I was your comrade of school at Wardham. She was even then beautiful. She remembers me of my bad English, and laughs me now of it."

In another shifting of positions, it was Detmold who was left with Alice, before one of the

chapels, where she stood engaged in inspecting an altar piece. She had deliberated and deliberated, and arrived at no conclusion. Unable to think of any better course, she addressed him simply as if nothing had happened.

“What do you think of Carotto?” she said, turning to him with a frank smile.

What did he think of Carotto? Heavens! He had abandoned the labors on which his success in the world depended, and crossed the better portion of two continents in search of her. He had tossed and wrestled and agonized with himself. He had pleaded to her and been repulsed with scorn. It was as if a great chasm had opened, or the deluge had come and creation been constructed anew; and now, after all this, they were to come together and talk jauntily about Carotto!

Well, he did not know that he had thought much about Carotto. He had hardly had time to go into the peculiarities of the minor painters. He thought, perhaps, that all of Carotto’s strong points, and many others, could be found in his master, Mantegna. If one took an interest in Carotto, however, and wanted to see his best productions, they were at San Tomaso and Santa Eufemia.

“Oh, I do not,” she hastened to explain.

"I only wish to do my duty by things a little when I fall in with them. I am trying to be conscientious, to make up for lost time."

"You must have seen almost everything. It is a long time that you have been abroad."

"But I have not made use of my opportunities; there were always so many people about, and so many distractions. We fell in with one party of friends after another, and stayed with them and traveled with them. You saw how it was at Paris. It was pleasant, of course, but one could not get about rapidly. Now that papa has come I shall make better progress. As soon as he has finished his business here he will do as I please. Do you think I shall like Verona?"

Her manner was conciliatory, and she seemed talking a little against time that nothing unpleasant might have a chance to occur.

"It will be very quiet after the great capitals, and it has not many startling curiosities."

"Why do you like it?"

"It has a kind of picturesqueness for which I used to have an especial fondness. But it is a matter of business with me more than of liking. I am making drawings of the buildings."

"In order to erect similar ones at home?"

"Possibly fragments from them here and there. It is our work to patch together odds

and ends from the past to make something durable for the present."

"But you can pick out all the merits and leave the defects. That is what modern architects do, is it not?"

"I wish we did," muttered Detmold.

"The works of architects are more prominent before the community than those of any other profession. I should think you would all be very conceited. It must be a splendid thing to look up at some great block, or church, or public building that attracts everybody's attention and say, That is mine; I made it. I should feel a head taller, for my part."

"Speaking from a very limited experience, I think it is rather agreeable."

Alice had reflected so much, at least, that she was far from satisfied with her conduct in the interview at Paris. She would have had the words and circumstances of it much different. Detmold's avowal had been sudden and unforeseen, and had greatly disconcerted her. In reviewing their acquaintance from the first, she could not now deny that there had been aspects of his previous course which might have afforded a sufficient intimation of what was likely to occur, if one had only thought to place the right construction upon them. If his long series of kind-

nesses and attentions had not been merely friendship and esteem but affection, why, that was quite a different matter.

She did not repent her answer, but it was a source of discomfort that a more severe opinion than was just should be entertained of her. Now that all was over, so far as her conduct had been harsh and even rude, perhaps it might be atoned for by extra consideration. Perhaps even something of their former intimacy might be re-established, if she was sure that he would never—that is—yes—that he would never broach the unfortunate subject again. If such a condition could be guaranteed, and provided that they themselves were passably reconciled to the situation, it would seem that the presence of her rejected suitors need not be oppressive to any woman. In the atmosphere of tender reverence so created, it would not be strange if she should feel herself something very precious, and be raised by it to a nobility beyond her normal self.

Alice rattled on about her father's plans at Verona, and her own desire to spend some of her time while there in copying, either in the churches or at the Museo Civico.

“The churches are damp, and the light in them is bad; you will do better at the Museum,” said Detmold. “The light is from the side and

not very good there either, but you will find subjects."

At the approach of Hyson and the others her manner was less free, and presently the party separated. As the young men took their leave, the Starfields hoped that they should see them soon at their hotel.

Detmold and Hyson dined together in the Piazza Brà to the sound of military music. Detmold confided to his friend, guardedly, the story of his passion and its unhappy fate.

"There is mismanagement somewhere," said that quick-witted adviser, briskly. "I should judge that she liked you. One can not tell without knowing all the circumstances, but as a general rule it does not pay to collapse too quickly. The course of true love does not run smooth, and no woman wants it to. A woman can not afford to be won too easily. You must keep asking. I make it a rule to ask about three times," said he gravely, plunging his fork into another morsel of roast fowl.

"Then you have been engaged?"

"Oh, a few times; not lately, you know."

"And how do the engagements come to be broken off?"

"Incompatibility of temper, usually."

## III.

## DETMOLD.

T was true, as gayly intimated by Hyson on the evening of the renconter at the Café Dante, that another motive than interest in the Old World for its own sake had brought Detmold to Europe. Not that this interest was not genuine and powerful, but he had his own way to make; and unless his cooler judgment had been overborne by an impulse too strong to resist, he would not have yielded to it and postponed by just so much his progress towards an established standing in the profession he had chosen. This impulse was at first only an unceasing desire to be again within sight and sound of a beautiful girl who had taken his fancy captive. He was not willing that Alice should add to the countless respects in which she was already his superior that of foreign travel, in which upon her return he could have no sympathy.

thetic associations in common with her. There would also be a satisfaction, even if a painful one, in observing what effect was being produced by the new and varied scenes in which she was now immersed, adverse to hopes which, although for reasons to be explained he dared not unreservedly cherish, he could not bring himself wholly to abandon. This first impulse developed into a settled and all-absorbing plan.

The young architect, shortly after his first arrival and settlement at Lakeport, had met Alice in some of its social gayeties. She was tall, charmingly dressed, soft and melodious in speech, and of engaging manners. She seemed capable of being a belle of the most despotic sort, had she chosen, as she apparently did not, to make a coquettish use of her powers. What especially attracted him was an eminently lady-like carriage and an air of being permeated through and through with refined and elegant influences. It affected him like an elegant perfume. He could estimate such adventitious circumstances at their true value, and refused to yield to baseness and pretense any greater respect on account of them. But to real worth they added, in his view, such an enhancement as is given by human skill even to materials in themselves the most rare. There had been

harsh facts in his own life which caused him to attach an extraordinary preciousness to cultivated and perfected beauty, from familiarity with which he had been too much shut out.

He was introduced at the house of the Star-fields, as at many others, by college classmates, who were glad to renew an old acquaintance that had been pleasant.

They welcomed him to Lakeport, and extended to him as far as lay in their power its hospitalities. He made a quietly agreeable impression and was well received.

It was a comfortable, spacious home, furnished in accordance with the taste of a merchant who aimed at a becoming solidity instead of the complicated flimsiness much affected by his neighbors. There were good servants, horses of the best stock, a trifle too fat, and conveyances of numerous styles.

The head of the house, wherever mentioned, was recognized on the instant as one of the foremost men of his city. He was identified with most of its important industries. He presided over numerous banks and companies, over the board of trade, and meetings to raise volunteers and to alleviate the distress of grasshopper sufferers. If a few persons of eminent responsibility were wanted for park or water board, or com-

missioners of the public debt, he was invariably of the number. He had declined political preferments, but in the prodigality of titles which it is even more our passion to delight to bestow than to solicit, he had not escaped a complimentary prefix. He was spoken of in the press and on public occasions as "Honorable." He was wont to indulge in the good-natured sarcasm at the politicians that he was called Honorable because he had never held an office.

His wife was a stout lady, of genial manners and excellent management, in virtue of which the household affairs ran smoothly. Alice was the youngest child of a considerable family, most of whom were now married and domiciled in the neighborhood of their home, at which they were frequent visitors. It was known by but a few that Alice was not the own child of the Starfields. She was in fact an adopted daughter, taken, it was vaguely understood where anything of the matter was known, from some distant relatives in reduced circumstances. But it was something of such long standing — she had been received into the family at so early an age — that it was practically unknown abroad and almost forgotten at home.

A coincidence of tastes contributed to facilitate the acquaintance between Alice and Det-

mold. It had been the plan of Mr. Starfield, in order to provide against the contingencies to which the best secured fortunes are subject, that each of his children should attain a measure of proficiency in some pursuit by which it would be possible, if necessity required, to procure a living. Alice had chosen painting. Detmold was able to give her some hints and assistance upon technical points from experience of his own in the same department. She painted coldly, in accordance, as he sometimes thought from other indications, with a constitutional tendency. He endeavored to infuse more warmth into her coloring. She showed a fondness for going thoroughly to the bottom of things, and made perspective and anatomical drawings which her circle of acquaintances considered astonishing and eccentric. Detmold's admiration did not blind him to the fact that, though an interested student, she was not a genius, and that her labors were not likely to result in the production of masterpieces. But what did it matter? Bent above her easel she was herself a charming picture. The most accomplished painter could have designed nothing more agreeable.

It was in this comfortable home, well warmed, clad in delicate raiment, sheltered from every rude shock under the protecting ægis of a parent

who was a power in the community, that Detmold first saw Alice at the age of twenty-three. He was one year her senior. When he found himself, even in his dreams, planning to bear her away to share his own precarious fortunes, he checked himself with a sense of cruelty, but even more decidedly with a recognition of what he considered the decree of an unpropitious destiny. There were reasons why, although he dearly loved her, he could allow himself no thought of the consummation for which ordinary lovers hope. Nothing so surely as any steps towards a formal marriage would throw a flood of publicity upon a subject into which he shunned inquiry with a dread that amounted to horror. Over this amiable young man of a poetic and ambitious nature there had hung, from his cradle, a shadow. It was not the lighter because it had rarely been penetrated by any about him, but rather the heavier by so much as the apprehension of disgrace is more painful than its reality. The secret, whatever its nature, was connected with his birth and parentage. No reference to these subjects or to his early youth ever escaped him. His sensitiveness was continually upon the alert, and even those reminiscences of others, so common in every-day conversation, which bore in this direction caused him alarm and embarrassment.

His secret dragged upon him and hampered the full manifestation of his excellent powers as heavy garments impede the action of an accomplished swimmer. There was a distance within which the most cordial advances made to him could not reach. He felt himself, with a sense of self-reproach varying in intensity but never wholly absent, a hypocrite and a pretender. Was he sure that if all were known, exhibitions of friendship would not be replaced by coldness and disgust? It was this feeling — by no means abated by a contemplation of the inequality of their fortunes — that determined Detmold's early admiration for Alice into a worship which was an object in itself and had no expectation of anything beyond.

Let us see upon how tangible a basis this morbid sensibility rested. He was the son of a man of prominence in a small Western community, whither after his first departure from it for his Eastern schooling he seldom repaired. It was an Illinois city of perhaps ten thousand inhabitants. Such a town is little more than a good-sized family. Each resident knows familiarly the concerns of all the others.

The elder Detmold was a thick-set, vigorous man, rather rustically dressed, and not above sitting upon a box or bale in his store of general

supplies and conversing affably with all comers. Had you asked for an account of him you would have learned that he paid dollar for dollar, his credit was unexceptionable, he adhered both to the letter and the spirit of his obligations. In the inquisitorial reports of the commercial agencies his hieroglyphic was E. 1. It denotes an estimated capital of from twenty-five thousand to fifty thousand dollars, and the highest credit. He took advantage of no one; he subscribed to charities both public and private. He was a man of education and original refinement. But upon this square-dealing merchant, with sometimes a humorous twinkle and sometimes a sad light in his gray eye, rested an ineffaceable stigma, — the stigma of crime years and years remote, bitterly atoned for, forgiven but never forgotten. Four and twenty years before he had violated the law and suffered its heavy penalty. With a strange perversity he had returned, when the prison gates were opened, with his wife and a child born during his absence, to his former home. Where he had lost his reputation and sinned and been subjected to shame, he chose to recover it. The step was looked upon with indignation as an open defiance of public decency. He was alone; his former partner and companion in guilt, who had escaped sentence, had disappeared. The returned convict

set to work at the humblest occupations. He became a day-laborer in the streets. Any becomingness of dress or habits of ease in which he had once indulged were discarded. He rose to be an employer of labor, and in course of time became a leading contractor. He built roads, streets, sewers, bridges, and, later, even railways. He was said to pay his men better wages, treat them more considerately, and perform his work with more scrupulous exactness than any of his competitors.

Good-natured gentlemen, tipped back in office chairs, away from the sterner morality of their women, admitted his virtues freely, and held that there was no telling what any man might do under strong enough temptation. No one abstained from the fullest business relations with him. A few at last opened their doors socially to him and his wife ; but in spite of the best intentions these advances were made so much a merit of, and served so forcibly to draw attention to what was withheld, that they were more painful than pleasant, and were rarely accepted. These long years of steadfast integrity and close observance were rewarded with popular respect, but oblivion could not be purchased. New-comers to Marburg rarely lost the story of Detmold's fall, not told out of malice, but idly, for the sake of the surprise

which it never failed to elicit. The husband and wife, long habituated to the situation in all its phases, bore it at last calmly and without pain.

Not so the child born to them in the first agony of disgrace, within the shade of the prison walls. He was permeated wholly with the bitter essence of the time and place. By a species of remorseless equilibrium, as the parents grew gravely reconciled to their lot, they saw the child become shiveringly sensitive to the slightest breath of disrepute. In the unhappy early days before a long martyrdom had caused any portion of the offense to be condoned, he learned that his father "had worn striped clothes" and was a "jail-bird." In the taunts of some of his playmates and the holding aloof of others he saw a wall raised up about him which seemed to exclude him from association with his kind. Hide as he would in the deepest recesses of his home, he could not wholly avoid idle words which filled him with rage and anguish. To escape this unhappiness, which renewed again the suffering of his parents, the boy was sent almost continuously to distant schools. The story followed dimly even there, and came after long respites to impair and cripple the growing confidence which he gained from association with his fellows upon equal terms. The secret became the central fact, and

dread of its disclosure the absorbing fear, of his life. It lay in the midst of consciousness like one of those dark tarns upon an Alpine pass, into which the brightness of the surrounding snows lapses and is dissipated.

Castelbarco, who was his schoolmate in these days, heard with others from the lips of some malicious or heedless urchin the tale of Detmold's father's crime, with none of the mitigating circumstances of the history.

As Detmold grew older and was surrounded by reasoning persons, who, if they knew his secret, were rarely capable of using it to wound him, he took more heart. At his Eastern university — for his father with a kind of bravado had determined to give him advantages which few or none of the other youth of the vicinity enjoyed — he won honors, engaged in manly exercises, made friendships, and had no external reminders of the disgrace which rested so darkly upon his antecedents. He reflected much in what honor and shame to the individual consist. He found it just that society should place a premium upon honesty and virtue by visiting with opprobrium the criminal, and perhaps even his descendants. For himself he saw no refuge except in a continuance of his policy of concealment. He came forth with a character deeply tinged by his pecul-

iar sorrow, but disciplined, accomplished, and in many ways well equipped for the strife of every-day existence.

He was now to choose a profession. His father's preference was the law. He would have had him return with his Eastern accomplishments to electrify the whole section round about, and make the name synonymous with marked ability and honor as it now was with odium. But the young man wished rather to settle in some distant locality, where even the name of his town should never be heard of. He confessed this feeling to his father, and implored him, as he had often done before, to remove from a scene where they had all suffered so much. This the elder Detmold could not or would not do. Whether it was, as is probable, that his property interests were so vested that they could not be removed; or that, so long past the age when change has any attractions, he shrank from entering upon new scenes and pursuits; or that, in fine, he believed in the entire reconciliation of public sentiment to himself and desired to pursue to a round and even completion the course he had marked out for himself, he refused to entertain the idea. He even hoped that in process of time the acute sensitiveness of his son and his aversion to his home would be outgrown.

The law was not to the taste of Detmold. He chose engineering, one of those professions in which it seemed more possible to do humanity a tangible service, and in which some skill with his pencil and the mechanical aptitude which he possessed, would come in play. But very early in the course of his studies at New York he made the acquaintance of some accomplished young architects, and examined their works. The union of the useful with the beautiful in this occupation greatly attracted him. The draughtsmanship of engineering is cold, and its achievements appeal to no sentiment but that of utility. But here was room for unlimited ingenuity of contrivance, with full opportunities for the indulgence of aesthetic inspirations.

He fell in with instructors and associates who were even more thoroughly artists than architects. They were mediævalists, and believed the thirteenth century the golden age of the world's existence. Their prophet was Ruskin, and their temple the Cà d'Oro at Venice. They had sketches by a so-called pre-Raphaelite school of artists upon their walls, and upon their book-shelves the works of the poets Rossetti and William Morris, with little vases painted by hand, and mosaics of Salviati. Their plans were not simply aids to putting up satisfactory buildings. Each was a

picture, with its lights, shades, and calculated effects. Soft and harmonious washes, the most pleasing projection of shadows, the effect of mats and various mountings, the character of frames, — often painted in person, with conventional ornaments, — were made objects of research.

Detmold learned to design cottages for Newport and villas for the suburban towns as irregular and delicate as castles in Spain. He gave them diamond window panes fixed in leaden sashes. The shadows lingered softly under their spacious porches; their fantastic gables and chimneys were projected against pale-blue cirrus skies or banks of piled-up thunder clouds. In the foreground he placed tall figures in dreamy attitudes. His father during this time made him an allowance which would have been munificent at home, but in the metropolis needed to be husbanded with careful economy.

It may be imagined that coming with such a training to Lakeport, a thriving city intensely devoted to money-getting, and largely settled by self-made people of the first generation, Detmold did not seem to fall at once into his proper groove.

His competitors here were mainly master-builders, who took contracts and were in the habit of furnishing the plans free of charge. Others were scarcely more than builders' brokers, who made

nominal charges to their patrons for architectural services, but derived their real profit from the mechanics in whose favor they were able to influence contracts. Detmold adopted none of these methods, and his progress was correspondingly slow. It is likely that this was not due to the refinement of his ideas so much as to a deficiency in push and bluster. There is evidence to show that the most rough-and-ready business men are not intractable in these matters if rightly managed. Had Detmold properly asserted himself and advertised his importance, Lakeport would have been ready enough to adopt his notions, and place its churches, banks, and schoolhouses in his hands, to do what he pleased with. Still, he was a hard and persevering worker, and there was little doubt of his ultimate success. He entered into competitions for court-houses, hospitals, and jails, — lingering upon the details of the last with a gloomy ingenuity and tenderness. In the second year of his stay he made almost a thousand dollars. In the next two there was a falling off.

During these years, with all the celerity of transit that brings the remotest points together, and the multiplied possibilities of disclosure in other ways, Detmold rested undisturbed. The Illinois city in which his secret was hidden lay to

the southward of the most direct routes to Lakeport, and had no commercial relations with it. Neither visitors nor rumors arrived to aggravate his ever alert sense of distrust. The better society of the place received him without misgivings, and he participated freely in its diversions. He used his opportunities as much as possible to be brought into contact with Alice. He was often in her drawing room; he walked and rode and made sketches with her, touched her hand in the dance, and sat by her side when passing companies, on their way to and from the metropolis, gave in the theater of the place the popular music and dramas of the day. He endeavored by small gifts or the contrivance of some surprise to keep her always in mind of him. His friends bantered him a little about his preference. It was even said by the gossips, who invent such things upon a very slight basis, that they were engaged. Even the faint connection established by this rumor filled him with delight. Alice, if she heard it too, paid it no manner of attention. He had known her to say that if one were incommoded by such reports it would be necessary to abandon nearly all one's friends.

There was in truth no basis for it. The intercourse of Alice and Detmold during the three years of their acquaintance was never free from a

trace of constraint. He recognized sadly that it arose from his own want of candor, the influence of the mystery in which he believed himself compelled to shroud his previous career. Their discourse rarely touched upon the warmer sentiments. It was purely friendly, and slightly formal when most at ease.

There were young men who had been her early playmates, the sons of families of the neighborhood, whom she addressed by their first names, and with whom she sometimes even romped a little. Detmold envied them this frank and careless daylight of publicity, shining through lives that had nothing to conceal.

Then came the departure for Europe. It was rather suddenly resolved upon, and brought up standing all his vague fancies and desires. Alice was to travel with friends from another city and pursue artistic studies, as well as might be, in London, Dresden, and Rome. In the following year her parents were to join her. In the last moments previous to her departure, the usual causes which sealed the lips o' Detmold were reinforced by others. Had he chosen to speak then, as in his pain at losing her he could hardly refrain from doing, it is probable that in the excitement of the preparations and her vivid anticipations of the novel pleasures awaiting her his

application would have met with less than ordinary consideration. He sent her flowers and also a pretty color brush with a silver handle, of which she made use in her studies, where it stood him in good stead as a memento.

She sailed away with the impression that he was simply one of a large number of people who had been kind to her, and to whom she was very much obliged. Nothing had transpired especially to distinguish him from the rest. In a round of new experiences she forgot him a thousand times for one that she thought of him.

Detmold saw the train bear her away upon the track, which seemed to lengthen out in limitless perspective, converging at last in the Eternal City, and then turned back to his affairs with a heavy heart. He ventured, after a time, to write to her. He would have had the words of his letter convey, if possible, more than their unaided meanings,—something tender and intense which he did not dare to say. In reality it was a guarded and respectful letter, from which nothing could have been inferred but a moderate friendship. Her reply, after a considerable delay, was a pretty note, containing some mention of her journeys, the people she had met, and her delight with everything foreign,—the whole in a hand of such size that a large consumption of

paper was involved in the telling of very little. There were one or two more letters on each side, Alice always withholding her replies a length of time which showed that the correspondence was not, with her, of an irresistibly engrossing nature.

Detmold heard much of her movements from her family,—her excursions to Hampton Court and to Windsor, her meetings with other travelers from Lakeport, the delights of Parisian shopping and the Louvre galleries, the strangeness of the hotels and pensions, the grandeur of the Alps, and the Florentine jewelry. Her presence amid these ancient and picturesque localities gave them in Detmold's estimation a warmth and inner brightness. They assumed a luminous quality which shone across the ocean and struck upon the retina of his imagination.

Nearly a year had elapsed; another spring was at hand, and the Starfields talked of their approaching departure. One day, after listening to their plans, an idea came to Detmold and moved him as if by sudden inspiration. It seemed to lift at last the embargo which a cruel destiny had placed upon his happiness. It was the reflection that it was possible to woo and win Alice beyond the seas, where the obstacles that were here so fatally potent had no existence. There his secret

was not known. He could divine no source from which it could be disclosed. Such an account of his family as he might choose to give, provided the confidence and affection of Alice were secured, would be accepted. With her own near friends abroad also, there would be no one in a position to prosecute inquiries about his antecedents, even if disposed. As a traveler, the situation of his fortune, furthermore, was less open to question. The traveler who has wherewithal to pay his reckoning is for the time being on a par with the most opulent of the company.

Detmold deliberately purposed to marry Alice abroad if it were a possible thing. From such a purpose, with its after consequences, he had once shrunk as if from the perpetration of a cruelty. Did his adoption of it now indicate a decadence to a lower moral plane? Perhaps it was, under the stimulus of a dearly cherished desire, only the result of an increased trust in his own powers and in the favorable contingencies of the future. Decadence or not, it was an impetuous re-action. Had he not suffered long enough? It was a passionate resolve to be happy.

Circumstances favored his design. During the winter his father, who had met with some reverses in his affairs and perhaps feared worse, settled upon him, unsolicited, a few thousand dollars,

determined that so much, at least, should be beyond the possibility of loss. It was this money that enabled him, contrary to the best judgment of the giver, to yield to the absorbing desire by which he was possessed. He wrote to Alice before he sailed, announcing his proposed journey, and expressing the hope that in the course of it he might have the good fortune to see her. In this letter, for the first time, he made a reference to his family and birthplace. He spoke of his mother, whom he tenderly loved, who had died some months before ; of the advancing age of his father, and his goodness to him (Detmold) ; and of the little city and its progress, which he was confidently expecting, he said, would shortly make a few suburban acres he owned there preferable to corner lots in New York or San Francisco.

Such a mention, which might have been the most natural thing in the world from another, seemed to him, because of its lifting the weight of his immense reticence, something extraordinary. Why, she would ask, should he write to her of his family and his property, unless — Ah, yes, she would infer. He looked upon this letter as almost tantamount to a declaration. But all of its expressions were platonic and respectful. The most acute person could never have divined

from it that the writer was setting off upon a journey of half the circumference of the globe, almost solely for the purpose of finding the young woman thus temperately addressed.

## IV.

## HIS JOURNEY.

IGH upon the banks of the sturdy ocean currents moved the tall steamer. Now a swirling chaos enveloped her, and again she traversed a surface scarcely vexed by a ripple. On days of calm, the life-boats and their tackle, the spars, smoke-stacks, awnings, the officer patrolling his bridge, the leadsman with his plumb, the spider-lines of the railings, every common object, projected against the azure field, was poetized. The sailors swung their weight upon the braces with fantastic measured chants. At times sea and sky blended without an outline, and the voyagers seemed pursuing their course with a sedate motion, in trackless space.

Detmold was separated by a waste of waters from the past,—from his secret and its embarrassments. His habitual inquietude was greatly soothed. He was moving towards a world of

beauty and romance, in the midst of which bloomed a dear and charming figure surpassed in none of its traditions. Upon disembarking he proceeded without haste to the meeting with Alice. It added a fuller zest to every pleasure that a greater was in store whenever he chose to claim it. Besides, it was important to have seen something first, in order to talk intelligently with her. He reveled in the quaintness of Chester and Oxford, and even permitted himself some pedestrian excursions upon the foot-paths of Coventry, Warwick, and Stratford. The park-like country was in the first green of spring ; lilac and hawthorn burdened the air with their fragrance.

There were always reminiscences of her. At Windsor the royal standard floated from the keep, as she had noted in her letter. At the school in London, where she had passed some time, he saw the Italian model dilated upon as a paragon of manly beauty. Detmold thought him a shock-headed, spindling young fellow, about whom, posing idly in an apartment full of energetic young women, there seemed something abnormal. He lingered some days amid the time-eaten masses of picturesqueness at Rouen. He sailed down the Seine to La Bouille, past the red and white villages, the orchards, the *châteaux* at the ends of formal avenues, the soldiers in sentry-boxes

by the road, the meadows bordered with poplars which cast grayish-green reflections upon the silvery water, as in the canvases of Corot. Early in May he took his seat in a railway coach for Paris. He had seen in the journals that devote themselves to the doings of English and American travelers something of the movements of Alice. She had left Rome, with her party, after Easter, and was in Paris by the middle of April.

The result of Detmold's reflections was a determination to make his proposal to Alice at the earliest feasible moment. It was quite uncertain when a period would be put to her sojourn abroad. True, her family were to join her, — their places by the steamer were already taken when he left, — and he knew that Alice had expressed a desire to remain another year. But nothing was certain : she might be ill, or called home by some unlooked-for event ; the active temperament of her father would perhaps weary of sight-seeing after a few months, and she would be likely to return with him. Detmold could not expect to be invited to accompany her party in their travels, and to follow them about would create an unpleasant impression. All the arguments, therefore, counseled immediate action. The most favorable answer he dared expect was a promise to take time to deliberate. If it was to be unfavorable,

the sooner it was over the better. Even if he was accepted there would need to be a considerable interval before the wedding, if indeed a wedding was to be thought of in Europe at all; but he relied for success, when it should come to this point, on the efficacy of an appeal to Alice's sense of romance, and on his own purpose, which he would then urge, of remaining abroad to engage in architectural studies. He made no doubt that from his letters, especially from the last, Alice was pretty well aware of his state of mind, and must have given to him and his intentions, and her own disposition in the matter, ample reflection.

In many a reverie of the ocean passage he tried to picture the circumstances under which the momentous declaration would be made. Perhaps it would be in some old gallery, over the treasures of which their admiration had kindled in common; perhaps by some ruin in mellow twilight; perhaps while driving on the shore of some beautiful lake, or floating in the evening upon its depths; perhaps on the veranda of some *châlet* hotel, after a hard day's climb in the mountains. How should he phrase his speech to her? But such an artificial preparation seemed a desecration. All must be left to the impulse of the moment. She would be shy, she would refuse, she would hesi-

tate, relent. Doubtless, if the poets be accurate in their accounts, a divine afflatus would take possession of him ; he would talk and act under the influence of an inspiration which would destroy every obstacle and every shade of constraint. She was as precious to him — he loved her as dearly as the most ardent of the heroes of these poets their heroines. If this condition were fulfilled, why should any of the others be lacking ? It was not to be expected that she should love him at the very start ; he did not deserve anything of the sort. He was to win her affection by degrees, — by being very good to her, — by a life-long devotion, until it was all his.

As he drew near to Paris his journey, which had acted hitherto as a sedative, had now rather the effect of an insufficient anodyne upon a patient in fever. It stimulated instead of allaying. His heart beat violently at times. His agitation increased with each mile. It was his constitutional habit to dread the worst, and his fears now returned with redoubled force.

The train rolled into the Gare de l'Ouest shortly after noon, and he was in the heart of Paris. The activity of his mind developed in many directions an unnatural acuteness. He comprehended things intuitively, and spoke the language during these first few days better than

ever afterwards. Waiting only to transfer his baggage to his hotel in the Rue St. Honoré, he hurried to the banker's for letters. There was a note from Alice,—in accordance with a request he had made her before sailing,—sent some time before from Rome and containing her address, nothing more. It was at a *pension* in the Rue Bassano. He thought it best to apprise her of his arrival. He sent a note by a *commissionnaire*, saying that he had brought some small articles from her family and wished to do himself the honor to present them. Mademoiselle was not at home, and no answer was returned. He did not call the same evening, but waited till the next. He devoted the interval to obtaining a preliminary idea of Paris. In twenty-four hours he had been, by all sorts of conveyances, in every part of it, from Montmartre to Montrouge, and from Bercy to Auteuil.

The following evening, in London-made clothes, of unusual becomingness, he went up the wide and animated avenue of the Champs Élysées to the Rue Bassano. There were several persons in the drawing-room of the pension. He scrutinized them curiously, and wished he could divine their relations to Alice. There were among the rest two young men, evidently inmates, whom he regarded with respect and hatred. Alice kept him

waiting a few moments, and then rustled down in a charming toilette. The entrance to the drawing-room was by a central door. She balanced an instant upon the threshold, scanning the room, and then saw him and came forward with a pleasant greeting. Her identity and naturalness among all the strange accessories impressed him with a feeling as when one finds the face of a friend gazing out familiarly from an album picked up in some remote and incongruous place.

She talked pleasantly of her travels and adventures. Sometimes she stopped abruptly in the midst of a recital to asseverate that she would not utter another syllable until she had heard fuller details of Lakeport and her friends. Detmold found his agitation succeeded by ease and a sense of restfulness. He basked in her presence as in a delightful temperature.

She presented him to some of the persons he had speculated about,—they were chiefly ladies of an elderly or uncertain age, who seemed to be arbiters of their own destiny and to carry life very much in a satchel,—and to Madame the proprietress. Although these persons in turn, after engaging in a short conversation, went about their business to other parts of the room, there was little or no privacy left to Alice and Detmold. The provoking aspect of this was that it seemed

to be of her own contriving. Detmold was to learn that there is a difference between American and Continental customs, and that it was the pleasure of Alice to subscribe to those among which she found herself. They included chaperonage, which rests upon the doctrine of the inherent unfitness of young women to be left alone. It would by no means do, under the eyes of the keen observers by whom she was surrounded, to fashion her conduct towards Detmold according to the provincial standards of Lakeport. There began to be speculations already as to whether the young man who talked to her so earnestly were not perhaps a lover pursuing her against the approbation of her parents — with whom she might possibly be preparing to elope.

She replied to the invitations which he pressed upon her at first, "It is not the custom."

He tried to rally her, and represented her subservience as evidence of a serious decline in patriotism.

"Let me remind you that your home is in the setting sun, Miss Alice," he said, lightly. "We ought to impose our fashions upon foreigners instead of adopting theirs. The effete despots of Europe undoubtedly rejoice with fiendish glee at our truckling to them, and Freedom shrieks every time she notices it."

"It is very likely, but that does not make it any the easier when you are in Rome to avoid doing as the rest of the Romans do."

"Then you can not drive with me?"

"No."

"Nor walk?"

She gave a little negative shake of the head.

"Nor go with me to any of the theaters, nor even to the panorama?"

Another negative movement, with a deprecating smile.

Mrs. Mason Russell, of Lakeport, with her pretty daughter of thirteen, for the education of whom she was ostensibly residing abroad, entered the room. She came and joined them, and the interview was permanently interrupted. It was plain that Alice was a favorite. The child nestled by her on a sofa and put her arm about her.

Alice was one of those slowly developing natures that remain young, if not always, at least long after their contemporaries. It might have been a constitutional trait in her that, although essentially feminine, she had been notably indifferent towards the other sex. As a young girl she had been content to make her plans of enjoyment with girls, without a thought that other companionship was to be desired. She had run away from her juvenile admirers, and later on

had received even formal advances with puzzling and impolite treatment, the consequences of which it had sometimes taken all the tact of her sagacious mamma to repair. She was now at the age of twenty-seven. The full treasure of her affection, if treasure there were, was still in reserve, to be lavished upon him who should at last meet with the favor of her capricious choice.

As the youngest of many children she had been kept a good deal in leading-strings, and favored with liberal installments of what her mamma termed "sensible notions." In her childhood she had not been pretty. She had come to an apprehension of her own attractiveness slowly and with incredulity. It was some such causes as these, when Detmold first met her, that mingled a trace of simplicity and even diffidence in her manners, the more pleasing because it would never have been looked for in so radiant a figure.

Her residence of fourteen months abroad, with its freedom from the too searching criticisms of a large family circle, its demands for independent action, and its frequent contact with strangers, who had without exception found her charming and had taken little pains to conceal it, had not been without results. It had increased her self-reliance and perhaps added a touch of coquetry

which Detmold, exerted as it was at his own expense, would not have spared any more than any other of the numberless items that went to make up the sum total of a wholly adorable composition.

During a fortnight in Paris he was baffled in every attempt to make the avowal with which his whole nature was burdened. He scarcely slept; at the table there was a choking in his throat, which refused food, and his heart acted abnormally. The first evening with her was not an unfavorable specimen of his experience throughout. Call when he would there were always others present. He went once with a party from the pension, by Mrs. Russell's invitation, by one of the miniature river steamers, the *bateaux-mouches*, to St. Cloud and the porcelain works of Sèvres. Again, they visited the Gobelin tapestries. Again, to obtain an insight into the amusements of less fashionable Paris, an evening was spent at a summer garden on the point of the island at the bridge of Henri Quatre. From this evening he hoped much. Perhaps Alice would stroll apart with him to watch the rush of the water by the parapets, or would be separated from the others involuntarily in the obscurity. But neither on this occasion nor any other was there afforded the slightest opening corresponding to his hopes.

Had Alice, then, already decided his case adversely? The inference would not be warranted while it was uncertain that her management to avoid being left alone with Detmold was not due to exaggerated deference to new standards of propriety, or to diffidence or coquetry, or indeed that there was management at all on her part, or anything further than the operation of the most ordinary fatalities. Should he postpone his purpose? What more favorable prospect offered either elsewhere or in the future?

Accident at length afforded an opportunity of which, unpropitious as it was, he availed himself. Instead of the fading twilights and tender seclusions he had pictured, it was the open street and glaring daylight. He encountered Alice returning alone to the Rue Bassano. She had been making some purchases in a shop on the grand avenue near by, with a companion who had been enticed away by others upon some small expedition which she did not care to join.

The young man asked leave to join her. She granted it with some nervousness. It is not certain that his purpose had been hitherto divined. If it had at all, it was only in the form of an improbable surmise, based upon his conduct during this period rather than upon anything in the past. His letters, in the efficacy of which he

had so trustingly confided, had conveyed nothing. But now, before a word was spoken, it impressed itself upon her as if it radiated from him in tangible form. He would not have wondered if it had. It seemed to him to fill the atmosphere so that pedestrians blocks away might have been sensible of it.

Alice would have given much to avoid what was coming. She had never thought of him as a lover. She liked and respected him well enough, but no impulse moved her strongly either for or against him. How could she know that he was the husband she would desire and whom she supposed she was destined in the ordinary course of things to have ! She was alone, too, in a strange world, without the point of support afforded by the presence of her family. She was not sure that she wished absolutely to refuse, but she could not by encouragement commit herself to future complications which might prove unwelcome. She was sensible of extreme embarrassment. The time and place added to it.

Detmold made an ardent beginning. He said that he had always loved her, and that he had come to Europe expressly upon this mission, because he could not keep away from her influence. Alice involuntarily quickened her step for an instant, when the subject was broached, then

slackened it. Her replies were given in the most chilling monosyllables.

She must have had some idea of his feeling towards her.

“Not the least.”

Finding her so cold, he believed that he was mortally offending her. He floundered in his speech; his words deserted him. How impertinent was not this lavishing of endearments if there were no responsive chord within her to which it appealed! They walked for some moments in silence; such a situation alone was defeat. Then he urged her gently for an answer, —to give him some hope, if not now, for the future, no matter how remote—some fragment—

“No, I can not.”

The tone was curt, even harsh, yet she could not for her life have made it different. They proceeded the rest of the short way in silence. As they parted she asked, as an effort at politeness, if they — her party — should see him again. He was going to Italy, he said, and they should probably never meet again. What could it matter? He turned partly away, and then extended his hand and said good-by. She placed hers in it. He raised it and pressed it to his lips.

The slight, surprised effort she made to withdraw it tightened its clasp for an instant in his.

It was with the thrill of this pressure, warm in the memories of both, that Alice mounted the stairs of her pension, flushed and perturbed, and Detmold went away to Verona, utterly routed and cut to pieces in his plans.

A feeling of immense loneliness came over him. The strange surroundings in which he knew no living soul, the thousands of miles of distance between him and his country, seemed as nothing to this fatal abandonment by the one person in all the world upon whom his hopes of happiness rested.

## V.

## HIS MOOD.

**N**O plan further than the bent of his own fancy guided Detmold to Verona. His taste as formed by his latest study inclined him strongly towards the rich Lombard architecture. After installing in the place of honor and dethroning one after another of the Classic, Renaissance, Oriental, and Gothic styles in turn, he had come to transfer his affections almost wholly to this. It seemed to him to combine the perfections of all. The territory in which it flourishes has been the battle-ground and dwelling-place of the most diverse peoples, and their influence is strongly impressed upon it. The studied dignity of Greece and Rome, the wild imagination of the barbarians who were conquered by Classic civilization in the very act of destroying it, the mysterious elegance and feeling for color of Saracens and Byzantines, are all

discernible. There are monuments showing in mass the Classic purity of line and proportion, in their frame-work and sculptures the Gothic ingenuity and wealth of fancy, and in their minor details of ornament — the rich marbles, mosaics, frescoes, and quaint intertwined patterns — the subtle Oriental taste brought back by crusaders or by Venetian merchant princes. In others the same elements are seen side by side, as the successive tides of conquest or fashion have left their impress upon structures as durable as the everlasting hills, juxtaposed but not commingled.

The mood of Detmold at Verona resembled some of the darkest of his former life. He had not, except at some rare moments of extreme self-delusion, looked for complete success in his mission, perhaps not even an *immediate* conditional success, but he had trusted that from the interview, whatever its character, some fragment of hope might be brought away. As it was, nothing remained to the future. He had been not simply rejected, but, as it seemed to him, repulsed with cruelty and scorn. His reflections, too, brought him again a vivid realization of the situation which his journey and his ardent passion had for a while obscured. What had he, in fact, to offer Alice in exchange for the comfortable surroundings of her life? He could hardly ex-

pect to be able to maintain even a moderate establishment from the earnings of his profession for several years. His small capital was rapidly wasting, and it was to be feared from the tenor of his home advices, which showed his father struggling in serious difficulties, that it might never be replenished with an inheritance of any sort. And then his secret. Obscure it as he might, there would have to come a time when it must be disclosed, when she would be called upon to rest under the shadow with him and would know all of his disingenuousness. Had he, then, any deserts which merited a better result?

Still, love rarely makes a beginning upon the basis of reason alone, and it is rarely to be put an end to simply by reasoning processes. As Detmold had secretly despaired in the midst of his hope, so he secretly hoped a little when there were the best of reasons for despair. It is a benevolent dispensation that human nature derives its sustenance from the circumstances about it, as vegetation from the sun and air and soil, and is not inexorably coerced by some original bias implanted in the germ. Breathing a new atmosphere, surrounded by novel sights and sounds, nourished upon strange viands, speaking and spoken to in an unaccustomed tongue, Detmold

was actively conscious of change in himself. There were times when the unhappy past did not seem to attach to his present identity, but to one shuffled off and far distant.

Besides, is it not out of the obstacles in the way of passion that its greatest intensity and sweetness have been evolved? The stream ripples musically only when it surmounts impediments. It is rarely in the unhampered, business-like joining of equal ranks and fortunes that are developed those instances of devotion and supreme tenderness in the contemplation of which a sympathetic public takes delight. It is the Cinderellas, King Cophetua and the beggar-maid, the romance of the poor young man, the condescension of the noble lady to the page of low degree, to which we extend our most friendly interest.

The unpropitious and apparently impossible inclose the germ of a felicity, vivid and ideal, beyond the conception of ordinary experience.

It is true that the obstacles in Detmold's way were largely of his own contriving, yet they were not the less formidable. For the reader may as well be told that Alice knew nothing about his fortune, for one thing, and cared less. She was not in the least of a mercenary turn. She was capable, if her affections were enlisted, of gener-

osity, of giving herself without reserve. She would have trusted that the future would be all that honest effort and a devotion implicitly relied upon could make it, and would have asked no more.

In matters of the heart Detmold was little experienced; he too had developed slowly. It is doubtful whether women appreciate too much idealizing. A less distant and romantic policy might have been attended with better results. Nothing had yet transpired to indicate that Alice would have wished her decision to have been different. But it is a phenomenon not entirely unheard of that a lover has been plunged into the deepest gloom when the case really was that the object by whose fancied coldness his misery was caused had scarcely an inkling of the reverence with which she was regarded, or perhaps was no more than gently coy, not to wear the appearance of being too easily won. Detmold combated mainly with himself. It amounts to the same thing, of course, but character is difficult to read, not so much on account of its essential depth and mystery as of the imperfection of the lenses we bring to bear upon it.

Detmold, wavering in his hopes and fears from day to day, and by no means more composed after the arrival of Alice, had set himself to

transfer the masterpieces of the beautiful architecture to his sketch-books. The image of Alice was ever present. It dawned upon him in the morning like a more precious sunrise, and rode in his dreams like the moon of midsummer nights.

His apartment was in what had once been a wing of the Grazzini palace, but had long been sequestered to different uses. The window of a closet attached to his principal chamber looked down into the court-yard. The view showed a quadrangle of buildings, two tall stories and an attic in height. One of the wings which still remained devoted to palatial uses was supported upon an irregular arcade of columns. There was a wide frieze at the top of the stuccoed walls, of frescoed medallions, Cupids, and flowers, all much streaked and faded. Upon the red-tiled roof were small dormers far apart. An old pomegranate-tree and some lemon and oleander shrubs in boxes grew by the walls. Underneath one of the windows was a saint upon a bracket. On its head a good-natured housekeeper occasionally hung towels to dry. There was a well-curb with a tackle so adjusted that it could be swung from above, and buckets of water hoisted to some of the upper rooms. A goat, keeping his head-quarters somewhere under the arcade, patrolled the court with an air of proprietorship; a family cat moved

stealthily about, and sometimes clambered into the pomegranate-tree with a tiger-like clutch.

Hyson came quite often to this apartment of Detmold, and so did his neighbor Antonio. It had a balcony in front, where the three sat in the evenings and ranged pleasantly over the subjects young men talk about. Mr. Starfield also came there once and smoked with them, and brought back such an account of the artistic manner in which it was fitted up that Mrs. Starfield, upon Detmold's next visit, exclaimed that she must be allowed to see it too.

Castelbarco turned the conversation often to the subject of Alice, and descanted upon her beauty and grace. Sometimes at the cafés he raised his glass and drank to the health of *la bella Americana*.

"Do you suppose he is going to fall in love with her?" said Detmold to Hyson, after one of these manifestations, in considerable annoyance.

"Oh, nothing to signify," said the other. "These Italians are all susceptible; they fall in love—as much as they can—with every pretty woman. I do not know but I should make a very tolerable Italian myself. But supposing he should, would you consider him a formidable rival?"

"He is a very handsome fellow," said Det-

mold, " and wealthy, and claims to be a kind of royal duke, or marquis, or something of that kind."

" I should not be at all alarmed if I were you. I think you stand well, as I have told you before. Miss Alice would never marry out of her own country or her own language unless there were extraordinary inducements. Antonio is handsome enough, but that amounts to very little, and he takes himself seriously, which is a good point, — but so do you, for that matter, except in a much better way. Women like to be imposed upon with an appearance of importance. They will carry on and have a good time with a fellow like me, for instance, but they don't wish really to tie up to a person who thinks almost everything a farce, and himself as much of a one as the rest. That is the reason I have such confounded poor luck with them when I really mean business."

" Why, your luck is the admiration of all your acquaintances."

" Oh, well, it looks pretty fair, but there are particular cases that they know nothing at all about."

Hyson was getting on tolerably well with his irrigation, studying the language to be able to read works on the subject in the original, — for

there are scarcely any to be had in translations,— and making frequent excursions into the country. Still he was annoyed by his linguistic deficiencies. In his journeys he could rarely ask the questions or receive the answers he desired with any degree of satisfaction. He wished he might have the advantage of examining some extensive properties treated by irrigation, with the friendly explanations of some one of authority with whom he was perfectly at ease.

“I can put you in the way of what you want,” said Antonio, upon hearing him express this desire. “Why did I not know of it before? You must go to Signor Niccolo.”

“By all means; but who is Signor Niccolo?”

“He is a rich farmer on the canal of Este, near Vicenza. He has all kinds of crops,— Indian corn, wheat, millet, *colza*, *panico*, and vegetables; *marcite* meadows; fruits,— figs, apples, peaches, melons, everything; rice-swamps, too; but above all his white mulberry-trees, from which he raises the fine silk of which we buy considerable quantities at our factory. I used to go there often in my boyhood to enjoy rural pleasures, and still I go sometimes for a day to taste the Signor Niccolo’s good wine. He has a pretty daughter, too, who is very quick in languages.

She will interpret for you, or, for that matter, I will go with you myself."

"The sooner the better," said Hyson. "It is precisely the opportunity I have been seeking."

"He is often in town, and I will arrange it," said Castelbarco.

Not long afterwards he brought the farmer he had spoken of to Detmold's apartment to see if perhaps Hyson were there, where he indeed found him. The Signor Niccolo was a short, round, very vivacious old gentleman, with a pleasant face, and white hair upon which he wore, under his hat, a skull cap. When his talk was obscure, Castelbarco explained it.

The evening was sultry, and at the suggestion of Hyson the party adjourned to a café. "It will delight me beyond measure," said Signor Niccolo, "to show you my poor estate. Do you know you could not have done better? I have the temerity to say I am no common farmer. I have made it a study. I have made it a science. I have traveled in the south of France where there are irrigated farms; in the Netherlands also,—it was there I got the idea of my windmill for cleaning the rice. As to water I can tell you everything. Ask me what you will. More than forty millions of tons of water are spread over the surface of Lombardy

every day. Does it produce a damp and humid atmosphere? Not in the least. The hygrometer rarely rises above zero of its scale; it shows excessive dryness. You may imagine what we would be without irrigation. You shall have a detailed account of the canal of Este, — plans, sections, everything will be shown you. It is now twenty years that I have been the general deputy of our *consorzio*, and sit as such in the council by which the whole canal is controlled."

"I do not understand *consorzio*," said Hyson.

"Do you not? You shall hear. The country irrigated by each main canal is divided into a number of districts. In each district a body of six or nine persons is chosen. It is called a *consorzio*. We make repairs and improvements, arrange what tax it is right for each proprietor who uses water to pay, and manage the water affairs in general. The chairmen of the *consorzios* form a superior body, which supervises the canal as a whole."

"You cultivate rice also. Is it not very unhealthy for the laborers?"

"It is bad for those who come from the high country, and so are the winter meadows. In the fall there is considerable malaria. Still in that we are fortunate, too. My rice-swamps are located on the borders only of the estate, remote

from our buildings, and I work them generally with hands who are acclimated, so that there is very little trouble. You shall see how I clean my rice with my windmill. That is my own idea. My neighbors use mills run by water diverted from the canal. But suppose there comes a drought. A head of water for such a purpose costs something then, I can tell you, — even if you are fortunate enough to get it at all. Besides, another thing. Here is my principal channel."

The demonstrative old gentleman suddenly stopped, laid down his stick upon the pavement, and made explanatory gestures over it, while passers-by were obliged to turn out to the right and left.

"Good ! Here are the secondary channels — so," drawing imaginary lines at right angles to the stick with the toe of his boot. "But now, here is a knoll far distant, which is near to my barns and my road, and is much the most convenient place for me to prepare my rice for the market. The water from the streams does not rise high enough to turn a mill here. Well, what do I do? Go down to the low ground with my mills, where it is very inconvenient? No, I simply recall what I have seen. I remember the Netherland mills. Signor Castelbarco can tell

you. It costs nothing to run ; but when the wind does not blow, then I have my water-mills elsewhere, like the rest." Signor Niccolo took up his stick and placed it again under his arm, with the air of having elucidated a very knotty problem.

" And how is pretty Emilia, Signor Niccolo ? " inquired Castelbarco.

" She is well, but she is not with me now, though I expect her soon. You have not then heard that she is again at Milan to study her music. I have given her the best master in the city."

" Bravo ! " said Castelbarco. " She will be a famous cantatrice."

" I know not what she will be, but she is a very good child," said the old man.

Upon taking leave, he cordially extended an invitation to the three to pay him a visit. They should have his best wine and his new horses, and Hyson should examine the irrigation to his heart's content.

" If you will let me choose a time," said he, " let me pray you to come when the early wheat is ripe. You shall see some fine stalks, I promise you."

Before they parted, a date not far distant was fixed upon for the excursion.

## VI.

## THE TORRE D'ORO.

HE weather was at times excessively warm, and the hotel Torre d'Oro al Gran Parigi was not in all respects as grand and airy as its title. Still, the streets were often freshened ; the fountain splashed in the Piazza Erbe ; our friends partook copiously of the half-frozen ices (*granita*) and of *aqua marena*, which is ice-water mingled with syrups, and were upon the whole sufficiently comfortable. Alice brought down to the breakfast table the morning after their arrival, and preserved afterwards as a memento of the Torre d'Oro, a copy of a cautionary notice affixed to the door of her chamber. It was a monument of ambitious but misguid ed etymology and spelling, apparently aggravated by reckless type-setting. It was the production of the secretary of the hotel, who acknowledged its authorship with pardonable pride.

"In order to avoiwhod," said this interesting notice, "any trouble which might arise, Mr. Mr. Canti et Gambogi beg to inform those Gentelmen who patronise their hôtel that they will not behold themselves responsible for valuable property unless deposeted with them and a receipt taken."

"'Valuable property' is good," said Hyson, "and Messrs. Canti and Gambogi do quite right not to be responsible for anything of the sort."

The phrase became a merry by-word. When anybody rattled on too fast in the flow of animated talk, or trenched upon a subject to which there were objections, it was common to hear "valuable property" interjected at him by some of the others.

Mrs. Starfield cared little for sight-seeing. She suffered herself to be driven about occasionally, took a nap in the afternoons, walked with the girls in the cool part of the day to see the shops, or sat in her room reading or knitting. The young ladies, who had seen most of the great show places, were pleased with the quaintness of Verona, but looked upon their stay there as a sort of respite. They were rather glad that the sights were not too numerous and engrossing. Alice had obtained permission to copy at the Museo Civico. She had chosen a subject, and went quite regularly to work at it. Miss Lons-

dale sometimes accompanied her, or sat with Mrs. Starfield, or wrote in a voluminous journal, or went out with a lady cicerone who explained things to her in French at a *lira* an hour.

Mr. Starfield was much absent in his researches among the *filande* and *filatoria*, the factories for winding and spinning silk. He went to Mantua and Brescia and back to Milan, and again to Roveredo, on the road to Trent. With the elder Castelbarco he spent several days at Iseo on Lake Guarda, where the latter had considerable interests. The country between Verona and Mantua produces the best twist and sewing silk, to which Mr. Starfield was giving especial attention.

On the trip to Mantua he was accompanied by the entire party, who, however, spent the day among the antiquities while he pursued his affairs.

Owing to the prolonged absences of Mr. Starfield, the young men organized and conducted much of the sight-seeing that was done. Detmold, by Hyson's advice, had taken early advantage of the invitation extended to him by Alice, and they were again upon a friendly footing. In spite of what had passed there was soon even greater ease between them than ever before. Detmold noted this, and ascribed it to the hopeless indifference of Alice, unembarrassed by a trace

of constraint. He had decided within himself that no further advances could be made towards the all-important subject unless in the wild contingency of some direct encouragement from her. It was perhaps an instinctive apprehension of this, on her side, and a trust in Detmold's delicacy, upon which the renewed intimacy was based. There was a tacit agreement that they were to be friends and nothing more. To natures more impatient and more completely penetrated with a sense of their own merits than Detmold's, such a footing might have seemed irksome and humiliating, but he found it happiness to be with her on any terms.

Among other changes Alice was now less scrupulous in her adherence to foreign conventionalisms. She excepted Castelbarco, who would have been likely to misconstrue any other manners than those to which he was accustomed, but did not refuse to take such short jaunts alone with Detmold or Hyson as might have been permitted in accordance with American usage. The presence of her family gave her a greater sense of security, and the possibly unfavorable comments of persons among whom she was to make so brief a stay were less an object of deference.

In the evenings there was a sort of familiar levee in the apartment of Mrs. Starfield. Our

friends compared the experiences of the day, played cards, made caricatures, examined the additions to Alice's collection of photographs, and discussed the personal intelligence in the *American Register*.

Other pleasant travelers stopped at the hotel, and an acquaintance was sometimes formed at *table d'hôte*. They met the Blumenthals and Lilienthals, wealthy German families of Lakeport, who were revisiting the fatherland after having made fortunes in America. They had not known them before, but now agreed that they were very interesting, and regretted that the diverse elements were not more fully mingled in the society of Lakeport.

There was the Honorable Hard-Pan Battledore, a member of Congress, who had come over the Brenner Pass with his family. When asked by Alice if he did not find these old cities delightful, he gave the extreme opposite view of the subject.

"Frankly," replied he, "I do not. They are not comfortable. They are not active in a commercial way. There is nothing to be learned from them about the present, in which our important interests are vested. Why should we delight in what is old and decrepit in towns more than in men? We sympathize with it in the latter, but after a certain stage of having out-

lived their usefulness, they become painful. Our fancy turns rather to what is young and blooming. I would rather look at you than at a quarter section of noseless statues" —

"Thank you," said Alice.

"I find no fault with people who like such things, but to me it seems a species of shiftlessness. I do not live near it myself, but I like to hear the rattle of the axe in the backwoods — progress — continually pushing on. When I want amusement I go to Lake Superior and fish. I am taking my family home as quickly as I can induce them to go."

A young Mr. Gilderoy, an artist and an acquaintance of Hyson's, came up to Verona to spend a day or two, and was introduced. He was preparing to paint a picture of The Ships of Tarshish, and was studying effects of color, and the models of antique galleys in the marine arsenal at Venice. He was enthusiastic in his talk, and Mrs. Starfield predicted a great future for him. But Hyson said he was an æsthetic loafer, without fixity of purpose, even if he had the disposition to accomplish anything. He merely made a pretext of his art to sponge upon his wealthy relatives.

At another time there arrived a mild-eyed young man in glasses, an ex-divinity student,

Mr. Acolyte Dean, also of Lakeport. He had been an inmate of an Episcopal seminary, had become infected with extreme ritualistic notions,—an idea of the substantial unity of all branches of the ancient church,—and like Miss Lonsdale had become a Catholic. He was then on his way to visit Rome. He inquired of the young ladies with much particularity concerning their experiences there. Alice mentioned to him that they had had two audiences with the Pope, and that she as well as Miss Lonsdale had taken his hand and kissed it.

“Oh, have you indeed?” cried the young divinity student, with an enthusiasm that was entirely artless and unreflecting. “Do you know, I could kiss *your* hand with the greatest honor because it has touched his.”

“Ho!” scoffed Hyson, who was sitting by, practicing a new method of stacking cards, “I lay no claim to reverence, but I will offer to do that much myself, out of pure good-nature.”

But Alice folded her pretty hands demurely out of sight, and projecting her head, with the chin a little in advance, said, “None of you shall do anything of the kind,” while Detmold thought of getting up in a Berserker rage and slaughtering everybody.

Castelbarco was present at these informal re-

ceptions nearly as often as the rest. He spoke both English and French, and had therefore no difficulty in holding his part in the conversations. Detmold remembered him well as a school-boy at Wardham. He was then a dark and unhappy little foreigner, in nankeen pantaloons, with his shoe-strings always untied, his fingers and thumb stained with ink, and his tasks in a state of backwardness. He had been noted for a quaint and amusing dialect which it had been the study of his companions to draw out. He said upon his first arrival that he spoke English "a leeter one." If he knocked at a door and one asked, "Who is there?" he answered, "It is this."

Once, when he had performed some feat that brought him into momentary prominence, the bystanders said in surprise, "Is that you, Antonio?" He replied, "Yes, I am."

He had grown up to be a tall and handsome young man. His card bore the imposing superscription, Antonio Castelbarco di Gualterio, which meant simply that he was Anthony Castelbarco, the son of Walter, and indicated that there were others of the name.

He had, out of his own language at least, no sense of humor. At the flippant sallies of Hyson, at which the rest laughed, he remained grave, somewhat puzzled, and even at times frowned.

He spoke of his own concerns with *naïve* confidence. His conversation consisted largely of disquisitions upon political, literary, or historical subjects. He made critical remarks upon Manzoni,—the Italian Walter Scott,—the modern poet, Giusti, and others, and was also forward to show his acquaintance with English and American writers. He made severe strictures upon ecclesiastics, which displeased Miss Lonsdale.

One evening they read among the arrivals at Paris the name Wyman, of Lakeport. "It is Monroe Wyman and Florence, on their wedding trip," said Mrs. Starfield. "I hope we shall meet them."

"They have been engaged so long that it almost seems as if they were married a good while ago," said Alice.

"Their engagement was nearly broken last winter; they came near not being married at all," said Mrs. Starfield.

"How, mamma?"

"It was about oval windows,—Mr. Detmold, as an architect, will appreciate this. You see, they were building a house, to have everything in readiness after their marriage. Florence was very partial to oval windows,—to light the hall, and so on, you know; Monroe did not like them. They compromised by agreeing to have two on

one side and one on the other, but on the side on which there were two, Monroe was to be allowed shrubbery partly to conceal one of them. He was called away for a week, and upon his return he passed by the house on his way to see Florence. By some blunder of the builders all three oval windows had been put upon the same side. He jumped to the conclusion that it was Florence's doing, and was so hurt by this unkindness and evidence of self-will on her part that, without assigning any reason, he did not go to see her for a long time. It was very serious, I assure you, and it was only by accident that things were explained."

"Lovers are so absurd," was the extraordinary comment of Alice, considering the presence of Detmold.

"That is a pretty sentiment, at the head-quarters of Romeo and Juliet!" said Hyson. "It is rank impiety."

"I do not think you have chosen much of an example," said Alice. "I have been reading over the play to-day, after a visit to the shabby garden where they pretend to show you Juliet's tomb. *They* were absurd, if no other lovers ever were. The idea of persons falling in love without knowing the first thing about each other, — without having exchanged a word! And the

extravagant way in which they began to talk ! Imagine anybody you know doing so at an evening party in these days.”

“ But it was not in these days,” said Hyson.

“ That is the point,” said Detmold. “ The better class then made an exclusive business of fighting and falling in love ; they had nothing else to occupy themselves with. Exaggeration of speech was another of their habits. I imagine their talk matched their trunk hose and satin doublets and ostrich plumes. Modern speech tends towards plain black and white, like its dress. Besides, here in Italy the custom of complimenting women within an inch of their lives has not disappeared yet. You yourself have probably heard some of the impertinences the gentlemen utter to unknown ladies on the streets.”

“ Still, with all allowances,” persisted Alice, “ for us, at any rate, the story is silly. I do not mean all of it,—only the first part, where they fall in love without any reason. There is neither dignity nor sense in it.”

“ It is pretty hard to tell what makes people fall in love,” said Detmold, with a sense of treading on very delicate ground, while Hyson regarded him with curiosity, to see how he was coming out. “ This play is not merely a story ;

it is a poem. The falling in love is a fatality, in spite of logic, which is perhaps not entirely unknown in modern times. The friar, in summing up the tragedy at the close, recognizes it in a very sublime sentence: '*A greater power than we can contradict hath thwarted our intents.*'"

"Mr. Detmold's opinion agrees with my own," said the good Mrs. Starfield. "There *is* a fatality. In these matters I always say, 'Whatever is to be, will be.' I have seen so much of it. You cannot hurry anything or force it."

This doctrine found in Detmold a ready disciple.

"These matters have to take their course," continued the motherly lady. "I know it from my own experience. The first engagement of Mr. Starfield with myself was broken off. We sent back each other's letters and gifts. He went East, and was gone several years. I heard that he was married, and he thought I was married. We met again, and the result was doubtless what it was always intended to be."

"I have seen my papa's letters, too," continued Alice, with an audacious raillery; "they were like all the rest,—so sentimental, so—oh!" A musical rising inflection could alone express the character of these letters.

"Why, you atrocious girl," said the horrified mamma, "you shall not talk so."

“Valuable property, my dear!” said Miss Lonsdale.

Detmold decided indubitably that this ridicule of passion meant more than mere flippancy. Was it not aimed especially at him? He could not but construe it as another of those indications — of which he had observed so many — of the absence of any depth of sentiment on her part, or of any comprehension of the seriousness of his.

Yet he did not construe it rightly. Whatever might have caused the levity of Alice on this and other occasions, she had reflected about Detmold very much since his proposal, and had decided that she liked him. To what extent, — or indeed anything definite further than this, — it would be difficult to say. Perhaps a second attempt on his part to draw from her some favorable expression would not have succeeded better than the first. She would have been glad, in truth, to postpone the subject of marriage indefinitely. Her life was very pleasant as it was. In such a great change there was — how could one tell what! There was room for grave apprehensions. If there could be a husband who was a kind of brother, and her papa and mamma and all the people she knew were to remain about her just the same, why, then it might not be so formida-

ble, and might be thought of. She had as yet no comprehension of the devotion that is stronger than all else and makes the woman say to him she loves, "Whither thou goest, I will go; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."

Still, in these days together at Verona, Alice saw more of him than in years before, and the intimacy was not without its effects. She found herself contemplating him critically, and not any longer as an indifferent portion of the furniture of society. The scrutiny did him no harm. She could admire in him elevation of sentiment and an honorable ambition for distinction. There were minor traits; he was charitable, good-tempered, dignified without pretense, and when entirely at ease could be humorous and vivacious. She asked herself in a speculative way, "How would it be to have him always around?"

Physically, Detmold was not disagreeable. He was tall, square-shouldered, and muscular, without heaviness. He had an honest expression, a clear skin, good teeth, and warm blood. It was not unpleasant to be touched by such a person. His hand when it met hers was dry and firm. Hers was soft, and shrank a little from a grasp which she must say was at times unwarrantably close. His dress was less scrupulously fashiona-

ble than Hyson's, but well fitting and in good taste.

His devotion to her was complete: he was ready to fetch and carry, to shift her chair into a better light, to find her the proper shop in the Corso for canvas and tubes of colors, to explain the money and the language, to find her little curiosities, and to send her flowers from the Piazza Erbe.

Perhaps there are natures that leap to an intuitive appreciation of each other in the sudden ignition of an intense flame of passion; but for humanity in general, fear and strangeness are laid aside, an adequate comprehension of character is obtained, and a happy future prepared, by such gradually advancing intimacies as this.

## VII.

## THE CASTELBARCOS.



HE Castelbarcos were the owners and operators of one of the principal silk-spinning establishments at Verona, and were pecuniarily interested in others at a distance. The senior Castelbarco was a business man somewhat after the American style. He was an excellent calculator, skilled to feel the delicate pulses of the market and quick to seize its most favorable moment. He had purchased the venture in which he was engaged at a low ebb of its fortunes, and had built it up by his good management into a flourishing concern. He was enterprising and public spirited as a citizen. He talked much of the advantages of Verona as a commercial point and as a place of residence. He even wrote communications for the journals, which had the ring of articles in the press of some of the thriving towns of our own West.

“ We have a population of seventy thousand souls,” he would say; “ why is it not one hundred thousand? We must have eventually thrice that number. Everything points to the future of Verona as a great metropolitan point: the railroads centring in our midst, the limitless water-power of the Adige, the valuable mines and inexhaustible marble quarries in the neighborhood, our silk of unsurpassed quality, and the attractiveness of our well-governed and healthful city, in which the taxes are low and no trace of malaria can be detected. A united effort must be made to disseminate a knowledge of these advantages. A partial impulse has been given of late to some of our industries by enterprising individuals,—notably to the silk manufacture; but this is not enough. Many of those whose interests are most nearly concerned manifest no conception of the need of activity. United and persistent effort is called for. All must put their shoulders to the wheel. Let the contest be henceforth, not who shall hold back the longest, but who shall most energetically take the lead.”

Signor Castelbarco had spent some years of his youth in the United States. He had been thrown mainly upon his own resources, and it was to this fact that he considered himself indebted for his industrious and accurate business habits. It was

as a clerk in a silk-importing house at New York that he had made the acquaintance of Mr. Starfield, who was a nephew of one of the members of the firm, and a fellow employee. With some means acquired in various enterprises there and afterwards in Montevideo, where there is a body of Italians who keep up a close connection with the mother country, he made upon his return the investment which had now advanced him so well upon the high road to fortune.

He had continued his relations with America for some time after leaving it, and had made occasional visits thither. Upon one of these he brought with him his eldest son, a boy of twelve, and left him during two years at an American school, in the hope that he would acquire something of the energetic spirit and dexterous methods which had proved invaluable in his own case. He wrote to Mr. Starfield, who was long since established as a prosperous manufacturer at Lakeport, and asked him to take a general cognizance of the boy. He did so, and, having a daughter at an institution near by, paid young Castelbarco occasional visits. Sometimes he took him with him on his visits to Alice, on half-holidays. The walk in the spacious grounds, which had once been those of the country-seat of an opulent Knickerbocker family; the parlors full of bright

and modest young girls chatting with their friends, whom they were allowed to receive on these days ; but above all the pretty face and manners of Alice, were extraordinary events in the monotonous life of the school-boy, and they made a profound impression upon him. He believed himself in love with Alice. He planned to run away to sea, discover a sunken treasure, and return and marry her.

The boy proved different in many respects from what his father would have desired. He brought back none of the commercial briskness or business tact which the senior Castelbarco looked for. His spirit was even injured instead of improved by his American schooling. The effect with him was precisely the reverse of that which had operated in Detmold's case. Detmold had been received upon terms of equality, and found a relief from persecutions at home. Castelbarco was a foreigner and an eccentricity among a troop of thoughtless boys. He learned timidity and self-distrust instead of the ease and confidence natural in more normal surroundings. He became reserved, sometimes to the point of moroseness, while under the surface lay a sensitiveness keenly played upon by every passing circumstance. The annoyances to which he was subjected caused him to abstain from the rougher sports of the

school. This, together with some instances when in extreme anger of disappointment he had been known to burst into tears, was looked upon as a feminine trait, and gained him the nickname of the *Signorina*. Once, in a paroxysm of rage, he pursued a boy with a pocket-knife, after which care was taken to stop short of the point of driving the *Signorina* to desperation. Detmold was pained at such scenes from the recollection of his own early sufferings, and he used what small influence he had to abate them. Castelbarco was duly grateful, and a kind of friendship sprang up between them.

Antonio pursued his schooling further at home, and spent some time in the sculptured courts of the University of Padua, after which he was appointed his father's lieutenant in the factory. Whether from incompetency or disinclination for the duties of the place, he fell presently to a subordinate position. His lack of aptitude for commercial success excited the disgust of his driving parent, and was the occasion at times of stormy reproaches. His mother, meanwhile, a stately old lady, devoted to ideas of ancestry and family dignity, wished that he need have nothing to do with the factory. She continually solicited her husband to put back less of his profits into trade, and to use them to restore something of

the state and consideration which their family had once enjoyed. She would have liked to have her son more bold and dashing, displaying in his manner a patrician haughtiness. She wished him to make an aristocratic marriage, and urged him much into society with that end in view.

The young man read with interest the biographies of his ancestors. All had been dignified, and some eminent. The Castelbarcos had no title, though they claimed connection — through descent from some far remote younger brother — with the counts of that name, the quaint sarcophagus of one of whom is bracketed out over the gate-way close to St. Anastasia. On the maternal side the descent was as good, and more clearly established. A Grazzini in the thirteenth century had been the chamberlain of the Duke of Modena, and had married a daughter of the counts of Novellara. Another, at a later date, had served with distinction under the great captain Gonsalvo de Cordova, and had married into a Spanish family at Naples. There were portraits of this couple in the collection that still remained at the Grazzini palace. Few of these ancestors had been remarkable in any civilian capacity. Their specialty was fighting. They had fought against the Turks, against the Paduans, against the Bergamasks, and against the

Venetians and for the Venetians by turns, participating in the mediæval taste for hard knocks to the full. Under the long Austrian domination the fortunes of the Grazzini had declined. From a noble castle in the mountains they were reduced to a *palazzino*, and then to a small *casi-no*, while their city property disappeared altogether. The history of the Castelbarco side of the house was not very different. While the blood of these two fine families flowed as pure as ever, it happened that the grandparents of Antonio on both sides had barely sufficient means to maintain their families in a style of moderate respectability. It was poverty, in fact, and nothing less, that drove the elder Castelbarco upon the wanderings in the New World which had resulted so prosperously. He returned with democratic notions and little respect for finical traditions which could not give a man a coat to his back or a roof over his head, though he were a cousin of all the Cæsars. The Signora Carmosina, his wife, retained, however, enough for both. It was at her instance that he repurchased, at a favorable moment, the main portion of the Grazzini palace. It was much dilapi-dated, had been out of the family for long genera-tions, and had even passed under another name.

There were in the Antonio of the present few traces of the slouchy little school-boy of years past. In an atmosphere of respect and consideration he had returned to a juster appreciation of himself. He was one of the fashionable young men of the day, elegant in manners, at home in the cafés and at his *cercle* or club. He was open-handed with his money, scattering it in cases of apparent distress to deserving and unworthy alike.

Notwithstanding the changes and improvements noted by our friends upon the renewal of the acquaintance, Castelbarco was still far from being a harmonious and well-balanced character. In the presence of his father he was morose, and at other times imperious and willful. His irregular process of education had resulted in nothing like discipline. He was not lacking in generous traits, but all was disorderly. He was spoiled and passionate. The good and evil in him were not comminuted and mingled, but seemed to rest side by side, in chaotic portions. Either was likely to have the upper hand of the other on any given occasion. At the time of the arrival of the Starfields he was drifting with events, displeased with himself, without knowing how to be different, and wishing vaguely — he knew not what.

The sight of Alice affected him with a new and lively emotion. It brought back the memory of his unhappy school-days. He compared the actual events of his life with the imaginings of that remote period. There was but one bright spot, one tender reminiscence in it, and it was Alice herself. She was not more beautiful now than he had thought her then. He recalled his romantic plans, in which she had been so conspicuous a figure. What if they might yet be realized? Things as strange had happened.

He saw her almost daily, and her kindness charmed him. Suddenly he said to himself, "I love her still." He persuaded himself that it was the same old passion that had only slept, and was now again awake. As if it had been really cherished all these years it seemed to take at once the strength and fixity of long duration. Here was at last an object and a purpose. He shared the not uncommon belief of ardent suitors, that could he but win the companionship of her he loved he should be filled with irrepressible ambition; everything would be open to him. He began to send her gifts — flowers, photographs, pretty scarfs and trinkets — in such profusion that Alice was obliged to go to the verge of rudeness to check his unwelcome liberality.

Somewhat more than a fortnight after the ar-

rival of the Starfields, Detmold, one afternoon, crossing the Piazza Erbe, paused a moment to glance at the ancient Madonna Verona, presiding in the sunshine over her fountain and the now comparatively idle market-place. He was accosted by Castelbarco, who drew him into the arcade of the Casa dei Mercanti. It is the chamber of commerce of Verona, a picturesque brick building of the fourteenth century, resting upon an arcade of red marble columns. It is one of the few that retains its bright external frescoing. It has a long balcony, a battlemented cornice, and at one corner, in a niche, a statue of the Virgin.

Castelbarco was there with some of his brother merchants on 'Change. But it was matter far different from quotations of staple goods or the fluctuations of corn and oil that he poured into the unwilling ear of Detmold.

"I am moved by an impulse of the moment, my dear friend," said he, "to seek your counsel; I think you will not refuse it to me. I am moved to it by a sudden impulse of the moment."

"I am not much of a counselor," said Detmold, "but I will do my best."

"I would learn of your social customs in respect to marriage," began Castelbarco. "I was

too young, and saw nothing of them, when present in your country. Do you know what I intend? I will not delay to say to you. I will marry the Signorina Starfield."

"Marry Alice? Marry Miss Starfield?" exclaimed Detmold, in consternation.

"It astonishes you, does it not? But see, now; my regard for this beautiful girl is not a new thing. It does not now commence. It is of years,—of the date when I was your companion of school in a distant land. Since she comes here it is only renewed—not for the first time commenced—you understand. It is strong now with the strength of a man. She has possessed me so fully that I think of nothing else. Her eyes set my heart on fire, and her lips speak sweeter accents than music."

"Have you proposed to her?" said Detmold.

"It is in that respect that I would consult your friendly advice. I have not. I do not know whether she divines of my purpose, though I have tried that it should be so. She does manifest to me unvarying kindness. Do you not think she would be content to remain in our Italy, which she thinks so beautiful?"

"I do not know, I am sure."

"It is only last night, at our parting, that she did express her sorrow to leave it. As for me,

it never was beautiful till now. You can not know how fine is everything that was before nothing, since I love her, and will make her my bride."

Ah, only too well did Detmold know this,— how the sun shines with a more genial light, how the heaven is bluer, how all nature is joyous, when the golden wine of a noble passion pulses in the veins!

"You do not reply anything," said Castelbarco.

"Why, man"—began Detmold, with an irritated impulse. He checked it, and said in a tone that he endeavored to make argumentative, "You must see that you are asking things to which any answer from me would be perfectly useless."

He found in the announcement made to him a cause for new alarm and despondency. Here was a love as ardent as his own. If love constitutes a claim upon its object, here was a claim as valid as his own. In what respect was he more favored than the young Italian? In how many respects was he not far less favored? Castelbarco was handsome, well-born, wealthy, and capable of generous devotion. His father, too, was her father's friend. This old acquaintance would abridge the interval between their so widely separated nationalities.

"That is right. Of course," said the Italian, "it was not that, but of the American custom to make the marriage proposal, that I wished to converse. I can ask you only without embarrassment. Is it, as with us, conveyed by means of the families of both, or must the signorina herself be supplicated, or are there other methods?"

"It is most usual to obtain the consent of the young lady; then her parents are consulted."

"Do not think me foolish, if you can avoid it. You have a thousand times obliged me. I will throw myself at her feet. She shall not refuse me. Say that you do not think she will, my dear friend."

"I have not the slightest idea," said Detmold, coldly. "There may be others—elsewhere—that love Miss Starsfield, also. Her affections may be already engaged."

Castelbarco darted at him a glance of sharp resentment. Then he said, passionately, "I know not what you mean. There can be no others,—there shall be no others. I have not loved before. Now I will not fail."

He conferred no more with Detmold. He began to suspect a rivalry, which had he not been so blinded by his own impetuosity he could have plainly seen. But if he had it is probable that he would not considered Detmold formidable—

as compared with the dashing Hyson, for instance. He knew something of his pecuniary circumstances, and felt that they would not commend him to the much-indulged Alice, or at any rate to her family. Furthermore, the architect was a heavy fellow, and not at all lover-like.

But as to Hyson, if there were no other rival in the field, he might easily rest secure. What devotion that studious young gentleman had to spare from his pursuit of irrigation was distributed in impartial shares to every pretty face he met.

## VIII.

## SAN ZENO.

 RT has its tiresome aspects. An original picture, much less a copy, is not the result of a single flash of inspiration. It goes forward touch by touch. There are oils that dry too slowly and varnishes that dry too quickly; colors give out at the wrong moment, and are to be mixed and matched. The back is weary, the head aches from undue straining after elusive effects that escape behind a *chevaux-de-frise* of mechanical difficulties.

Alice arose, at times, from her task at the Museo Civico and wended her way homeward, tired, heavy-eyed, her toilette a little flattened and the bloom of her brightness for the moment dimmed. Her solicitous mamma would declare that such application was unheard of,—that it was ruinous,—the study must be abandoned. Then there was usually a few days' respite.

Detmold set forth persistently every morning to add still other pages to his voluminous sketch-books. They contained façades in full, and fragments more charming than the wholes. There were palaces and basilicas, the battlemented bridge of the Castel Vecchio, with its unequal, downhill arches, the curious staircase in the court-yard of the Municipio, and a corner of the Chamber of Commerce. There were door and window openings, with arched heads of party-colored stone, their tympanums filled with sculpture or mosaic; there were campaniles, turrets, chimney-pots of a hundred varieties, balconies, figures or single heads from bas-reliefs and frescoes; but above all, a collection of the lovely porches which are the crowning glory of Verona. They are light and simple. Their arches are of contrasted stones; they are inlaid with sculpture; their columns — sometimes single, sometimes clustered and superposed — are of red marble, and rest upon grotesque animals. The ruddy sunshine invades them and the warm air blows through them. They cast rich, strong shadows, in which there is not a suggestion of gloom.

One morning, in the tenth century basilica of San Zeno, Detmold looked up from his drawing and saw Alice, Miss Lonsdale, and Hyson beside him.

"Pray, do not let us disturb you," said Miss Lonsdale. "We like to see you work. Perhaps we can steal your process."

"How pretty your sketches are!" said Alice. "I wish I could do that."

"I am sure you could, if you would. It is very easy."

"Of course it is, when one knows how; but I have tried. The perspective always bothers me. I am very stupid about perspective."

"But you have a correct eye, and this can be done even without perspective. Imagine the space you wish to include in your drawing to be perfectly flat. Do not think of projection at all. Then try to see what angles and shapes the different objects in this flat space assume. Anybody who can draw a figure as correctly as you can do it. Of course, perspective is an assistance. I do not mean to make light of it."

"That seems a good idea," said Alice. "If I had some paper, I might make the experiment now."

Detmold gave her the requisite materials. She seated herself upon the steps that lead down to the floor of the nave from the entrance, and began a view somewhat like Detmold's. The singular wooden roof of the vast interior is supported upon alternate massive columns and piers.

They have bizarre capitals of intertwined foliage, serpents, and animals. A flight of broad stone steps rises to the chancel, and at its sides two other flights descend to the ancient crypt, plainly visible, where, behind a grille and under a canopy supported by forty marble shafts, the bones of the ancient patron of the basilica repose. Along the chancel railing, as at St. Mark's, at Venice, pose themselves a row of life-size figures.

"This is quite improving, of course," said Hyson; "but, meanwhile, what is to become of us?"

"You can go and see the cloisters," said Alice; "they are very nice."

"Not at all," replied Hyson; "what Miss Lonsdale and I will do is to go and see the Castel Vecchio. Nobody has yet been inside of it, and we shall have the advantage of you all. Shall we call for you after that?"

"If you will, please. I do not feel like climbing, to-day; and besides, this is really an important discovery I have made."

Alice abandoned this sketch, presently, as too vexatious. She could not keep the idea out of her head that the lines came towards her. Things would not stay flat. She procured more paper, and wandered about with a deliberative air in search of another subject. She placed her-

self, at length, before the sitting statue of San Zeno. It is an archaic work, and of colored marble, in accordance with the tradition that the venerable patron was an African. The exaggeration of some intended expression of spiritual rapture gives the features a grotesque appearance of laughing.

“Why do you choose such a sorry figure?” asked Detmold. “I shall have a less exalted idea of your taste.”

“I like it because it is odd and comical,” she replied. “Besides, I wish it to be understood that I make my sketches without regard to age, sex, color, or previous condition of servitude.”

She contemplated the figure with one eye shut and her pencil held up to make measurements. Detmold forsook his own subject, and furtively made a drawing of her, instead. They were not too far separated to converse. Alice had learned from him something of the characteristics of the style in the midst of which they were, and had even taken an interest in acquiring some of the architectural terms. Detmold affected to conduct a cross-examination, to see if she had forgotten anything. He asked her, What is an archivolt? what is an abacus? what is a chamfer?

She replied to a few of the queries with an imitation of school-girl readiness; then, with a

pretense of supposing that he was really inquiring for his own information, said with an inflection conveying surprise and commiseration, "Oh, don't you know what a chamfer is? Almost anybody knows that."

The best kind of love-making does not necessarily consist in excessive manifestations of affection or epithets of endearment. It is quite as often in the circumstances of routine conversation and intercourse, when tones, glances, gestures, the sentiment of pleasure in each other's appearance and delight in each other's company, play in and out among the ordinary words and illuminate them. There are charming conversations in which not a single striking idea is advanced.

What is a morning's conversation between two such people? It is not a sustained argument nor alternate disquisitions. If taken down in short-hand it might fill a volume. It would be broken, illogical, trivial. One wonders as to the reason of some circumstance or phenomenon; explanations are suggested, or one who already knows informs the other. They call up reminiscences. They say how they enjoyed their ride or row at such a date, or the labyrinth figure in a certain german at the Jacksons'. Or they speak of people they have known, and analyze them and their

careers,—the drowning of Smith, the curious marriage of Brown; or of persons they met in the diligence, crossing the mountains; or the peculiarities of the landlord at Bellinzona. Or they go a little into their individual characteristics, if intimate enough. One confesses to a tendency to alternate moods of elation and sadness, without assignable cause; the other prescribes philosophic rules for the cultivation of an equable temper. Through the whole are scattered banter and slight coquettices.

The sound of Alice's voice, the animation of her countenance, the grace of her attitudes, were wisdom enough for Detmold; it made very little difference what she said.

The morning was passing. The sun mounted to the zenith; the shadow of the basilica returned slowly from its march to the westward, and drew its strong line close to the sculptured porch. The young man and the pretty woman came out to see if their friends were not returning. At each side of the portal a great space is covered with ancient bas-reliefs in panels. There are Adam and Eve in Paradise, and all the scriptural personages; saints, knights in armor, and King Theodoric in full chase after a deer which his dogs have seized, while a sardonic demon lies in wait to seize the king himself. The doors are

faced with bronze reliefs of the earliest mediæval make. The figures are as rude as the plastic achievements of children, but full of a biting energy, and disposed in accordance with an instinctive feeling for effect. The tall red columns of the porch rest upon the backs of red marble lions crouching upon the stone platform.

“Is it not a barbarous taste to support such structures upon the backs of animals?” said Alice. “When caryatides came into use in the classic style, I believe we are to consider it a symptom of decadence, are we not?”

“But not this. It is bold and picturesque. The figures do not represent actual animals, you see. If this were an imitation of a real lion,” said he, placing his hand upon the head of one of the monsters, “that would be quite a different matter. They are conventionalized.”

Alice rested comfortably against the back of the other, like a modern Ariadne in a muslin robe.

“But in society, you know,” returned she, argumentatively, “we do not like conventionalism. We profess admiration for what is spontaneous and natural. If we do not like conventional people, why should we like conventional lions?”

“Conventionalism in common things,” said Detmold, “is a species of toadyism; it is an imitation of models that are generally not worthy

of imitation, and it prevails at the expense of originality and independence. Conventionalism in art is so different a thing that it ought to be distinguished by a different name. Of course there is good and bad conventionalism in art, too. But in its best sense it is a species of imagination. It is the ingenious fitting of something to circumstances by seizing its essential spirit and neglecting the rest. This so-called lion is not a lion at all, but only an abstraction of the sturdiness and bold outlines of one. The lion is merely the theme on which the composition is made. This is really an imaginary animal, expressly created for the work of holding up porches. That is why there is nothing disagreeable about it. If it were a good imitation, we should be involuntarily nervous lest he should move and bring the porch toppling down upon us."

"I am certain that this one is not in the least disposed to," said Alice, tapping the grotesque head with her parasol.

"I don't know that I find that so surprising," said he in something of an undertone. Then he went on without interruption: "The theory is that it is bad art to apply a perfect likeness of anything to a purpose to which the thing itself could not be adapted. An ideal race of creatures and flowers and foliage must be created for capi-

tals, gargoyles, carpets, and wall-papers. They may be based upon familiar objects, but must not exactly imitate them."

"But you see such imitations so often," said Alice.

"Of course you do, and you undoubtedly always will, simply because there is a hundred-fold more bad art in the world than good."

"You do not think that perhaps the Lombards made lions this way because it was the best they knew how, do you?" asked Alice; "because they were ignorant, and it was the nearest resemblance they could get, you know?"

"They show too much skill in other respects," said Detmold. "They had a pretty intimate connection with the East, and knew what lions were as well as ourselves, if they had wished to copy them."

Hyson and Miss Lonsdale returned, and the little group rode away together. On the facade of the basilica is a great sculptured wheel of fortune, with a king at the top and a naked beggar beneath. Detmold translated the motto from the text in the guide-book:—

"All mortal things I rule at will,  
Raise up, cast down, give good or ill."

"It would not be so bad," said he, "if it went all the way round. It generally oscillates a

little way up, then a large way back. If it were only established that everybody should make the complete circuit,—undergo in turn all the phases of existence,—that would be something like justice, and a cosmopolitan experience. As it is, it picks up a favored few and whirls them to the top, while the most it leaves at the bottom and crunches them like a cart wheel."

"None of us here present seem to have any bones broken," said Hyson.

"Perhaps we have not yet felt its full weight," said Detmold.

## IX.

## THE MUSEO CIVICO.

ETMOLD'S admiration knew no bounds. In every aspect and phase of character he found Alice unspeakably charming. Some accent of hers, some delicate pose of the head, some evanescent contraction of the brows, with an expression between smile and frown, came to him at moments in his work like an aroma. He could close his eyes and conjure up her face, blown round with its shining hair. All the details of her dress, each of the pretty, fashion-changing buttons, buckles, clasps upon it, seemed as precious as jewelry, and the material of which it was made as valuable as the rarest Oriental fabrics. Her person connected itself with ideas of all fragrant spices.

His wandering in the great galleries since he first set foot upon European soil was simply a long series of comparisons. He found no stateli-

ness of Leonardo, no pensive grace of Raphael, no golden hair of Titian, so perfect as hers. He would admit in her no possible imperfection. If her figure was slightly flat, it was a suggestion of the sweet austerity of Gothic sculpture, which shows no swelling contours, but only straight-falling draperies and serene and noble faces. If at twenty-seven many less favored women have passed the most perfect moment, this age was in her only a guarantee of exquisite, stored-up sweetness.

He drew her with aureolas about her head. He conceived the idea of painting her, in her ordinary dress, upon a gold background, like a saint of Fra Angelico, and actually made a commencement. He intended to give it no exaggerated air of religious aspiration, but to try to portray the sanctity of a type of pure and sterling modern loveliness.

On her side, what was this goddess, this paragon of all conceivable perfections? There were people who did not coincide with Detmold as to her transcendent beauty. She had a few freckles, and her hair was a little off color, neither blonde nor brown. She was admitted by some to be a "stylish" girl, — nothing more. Her family had not discovered anything phenomenal, either, in the way of goodness. There had even been

displays of willfulness and temper by no means congruous with aureolas and gold backgrounds. She sang ballads in an agreeable voice enough, but of no great compass, and as to her artistic talent, a sufficient judgment has already been passed upon it. She would hardly achieve imperishable renown by means of it. She was a little spoiled by having been kept entirely away from the graver aspects of life, and was wedded to its conventional good things,— how much it would be hard to say.

The ineffable perfections conceived by Detmold were largely within himself. The imagination needs only an adequate resting-point to move with its lever the whole of existence, and Detmold had found it.

Still, his extravagance of feeling might have been lavished in many a less worthy direction. Alice had a kind heart, a frank nature, a quick and graceful mind, and an appreciation of beauty that rivaled his own. The pleasure of the artist is not confined to the few poor subjects which he can transfer to canvas and place before the eyes of others. Colors combine, draperies fall, objects dispose themselves, and fugitive lights and shadows play at every turn to fill his educated sense with enjoyment. Alice had gone far enough beyond the mere mechanical preliminaries of her

study to have some conception of this. Possibly there was no great harm in Detmold's idealizing process. A pretty woman, with an average head and an honest and delicate nature,—the limit to which admiration of her may justly extend has nowhere been definitely fixed. And if one be so constituted as to be a little extreme in his sentimental appreciation one might easily lapse into faults much worse.

Unless there were special engagements to prevent, Alice went daily to the Museo Civico. It is one of the heavy designs of San Michele, and lies on a quay of the Adige. It was formerly the palace of the Count Alexander Pompei, and was presented by him to the city for a gallery and museum,—which accounts for the pictures being poorly lighted, only from side windows. The amateur of painting who chooses to spare a day from the greater glories of Venice, Milan, or Bologna, close at hand, finds at Verona a collection of minor masters belonging almost exclusively to its own school at a time when every Italian city had its school. There are Orbettos, Benaglios, Badiles, and Morones,—lesser lights in the great constellation which flamed so splendidly afterwards at Venice. They have painted the usual Sibyls, Saint Sebastians, and Flagellations at the Pillar, rigid, cold, and cadaverous,

with only here and there a gleam of beauty flickering upon them, as though it might be burning softly behind all the dreary canvas, and could only for the present make its way out at minute crevices.

Among the rest — more fully represented than any other — is one Cavazzola, who had the singular fortune to be entirely neglected by the critical writers who treated of his contemporaries for three hundred years. An endeavor was made to exclude him from the pantheon of history. But after coming down unnoticed from the sixteenth century to the year 1853, there arose a Veronese poet, Aleardo Aleardi, says a recent eulogist, who deserves well of his city and the confraternity of painters for having published a biography full of the sufflation of poesy and art, in which the unfortunate master is vindicated from the long obloquy of silence.

Alice had adopted the fashion of the Veronese ladies, who in summer discard the hat for a long, black lace veil depending from the hair, and serving also as a mantilla. It gave a princess-like stateliness to her slender figure, as she moved forward with her easy, gliding motion. Sometimes Detmold accompanied her to the Museo, or called for her to return. He walked beside her with a fond pride. Sometimes he

made it consist with his own occupations to repair thither and spend an hour in her society. It was cool in the small and quiet galleries, while the sun poured hotly down upon the quay outside. Here they conversed together in low, sedate tones that breathed again in the memory of Detmold during many a sad day long afterwards. The eyes of the ancient paintings looked out at them with a stiff sympathy. A few other copyists, belonging to the academy below-stairs, were scattered through the galleries at long intervals. Now and then the stillness was broken by slight clatterings, echoing hollowly from a distance, where the custodian occupied himself with small repairs, or mounted upon a ladder to shift the position of a picture.

The work upon which Alice was engaged was a copy of a portion of the portrait of the warrior Pasio Guarienti, by Paul Veronese. The face is ruddy with exposure and comfortable living, and fringed with a grizzled beard; the figure is resplendent in armor of steel, embossed in black and gold.

One day, when Detmold entered, she had just concluded some touches which seemed to meet with her decided approval. The brush was still poised in her hand, a little way back from the canvas, as though its continued proximity were

necessary to maintain the charm of a successful result.

“How is the future San Michele—or Palladio—which shall I say?” said she, playfully, turning her head towards him, with her eyes still lingering upon the work, as he came and stood by her easel.

“If you care to consult my taste, suppose you say Giotto or even Pugin. I should have no great fancy for the reputation of one of these Renaissance architects.”

“Why not?”

“Mainly because I have no great fancy for their works. The best of them are cold and ugly, and I have seen things of Palladio’s at Vicenza that might have been done to order for some of my own customers at Lakeport.”

“Oh, the Renaissance. To be sure. It is only Gothic we are to like.”

“I wish I had the control of some clients who were as docile as you pretend to be,” said the young man, laughing at this thrust at his enthusiasm. “No, people may like Renaissance if they please. I can give æsthetic reasons why I personally do not. At the same time it is possible that the real reason is only because I have not yet exhausted the pleasure I take in Gothic, and am not in search of a novelty. Perhaps

there is no such thing as ultimate perfection — or at least ultimate content with it — possible in architecture. No sooner was Gothic developed to its highest point than the world turned away from it at that very moment, and fell in love with the revived classic, its diametrical opposite. After the latter had been extraordinarily perfected, back went the fashion to Gothic. Since then there have been re-revivals of classic and re-revivals of Gothic, and eclectic minglings together of the two, without end. We like to change the style of our architecture just as we like to change the style of our clothes. Novelty is what we are after, and, in one case as well as in the other, sometimes we retrograde and sometimes we advance. When we hold fast what is good in garments and add to it, without ever going backwards, and pause finally when they are made fully worthy of the dignity of the human figure, perhaps we shall be ready to do the same thing with buildings. A house is only a larger kind of an over-coat, after all. It does not wear out as quickly, but it performs about the same sort of service, and is naturally subject to the same sort of fluctuations."

"That is less hopeful than your usual strain. I do not know whether I shall believe in you, any longer, as the coming inventor of the great American style."

"I am as likely to be it as anybody else, notwithstanding. There is not going to be any. If there is any style at all, after this, it will be a universal one. But how is the future Angelica Kauffmann, or shall I say Rosa Bonheur?"

"If it is equally convenient, suppose you do not retort, and only say Alice Starfield. I was getting on very well when you came in. See if you do not think I have caught the tones in that shaded cheek pretty well. It seems so to me. Please say you think so. You can not imagine how I have fussed over them, and painted them in and out."

"You certainly have," said Detmold. "Anybody who should find fault with that part of your copy, at least, ought to be drawn and quartered. It is exactly right."

"Do you think so? I am so glad! I wish I could be an immense egotist. I am a little of one now, but I mean perfectly enormous, so as never to have any misgivings."

"I am sure I can think of nobody who has less reason for them," said Detmold.

"That is one of the kind of things for which Mr. Hyson says, 'Pray consider my hat off.' But really, what a comfortable thing it must be to be perfectly satisfied with everything you do. Fame and the commendation of others are noth-

ing to it, because they are irregular and uncertain. Everything is included in self-approbation. If little can be added to it from the outside, nothing can be taken away. Does it make any difference whether you really have genius or not, if you firmly believe you have? A thorough egotist, such as one or two I know of, ought to be happier than Michel Angelo or Napoleon Bonaparte."

"Or our friend Cavazzola, in there."

"Ah, poor Cavazzola! Is not his case truly melancholy? To do something that is really worthy of recognition, and not to get the slightest credit for it for three hundred years, while all the glory there is goes to one's inferiors!"

"I do not know whether it is an instance of the general incapacity of the human race for original thinking, and its persistency in following authorities through thick and thin, or of the fondness of some modern writers—of whom Signor Aleardo Aleardi, poet as he was, may have been one—for contradicting and taking the opposite side of everything that was considered settled. After such an experience, the merit of this much-neglected light of the school of Verona is at least open to doubt. The real article usually asserts itself in less time so strongly that it cannot be choked off."

“These interminable schools!” cried Alice. “I can make nothing of them. There are not simply some pictures at Verona, but ‘the school of Verona.’ And the school of Padua and Mantua and Pisa, and I suppose schools of every village and hamlet in the country; besides the schools of the great cities and of all the foreign countries. I shall never make any progress in egotism as long as they puzzle me so.”

“Do you know most of the dates?” inquired Detmold.

“What a dreadful question! Of course not. It is more than I can cope with to attempt to find out something of their respective characteristics, without adding any such element of confusion to the task.”

“Oh, I mean in a general way.”

“No; I do not like dates even in that way.”

“I used to find it handy,” said Detmold, “to look at the subject chronologically, in a very general way. One naturally has the idea that the schools were all buzzing alongside of each other at the same time, doing the same thing in different manners. But they were very little contemporaneous. They followed in succession. That takes one element out of the complication. Another is got rid of by remembering that the local writers about a place, as Verona, for instance,

usually talk of the pictures painted there as belonging to its *school*, when in reality it had no school different from those of half a dozen other places, where the same sort of thing was done. The really tangible schools for the most part succeeded each other. This Italian art reached its climax about the end of the fifteenth century,—but this is preaching."

"Will you go on, please?"

"Then comes German art in the sixteenth, Flemish and French early in the seventeenth, Spanish later, and English in the eighteenth,—but all following directly from Italian influence. Then the three great schools of Florence, Rome, and Venice, in Italy itself, started unequally, but for a time carried on their respective specialties, namely, form, expression, and color, side by side. Out of them sprang the advanced schools of Bologna, Milan, Parma, and Naples. That is about all there were. Then if you divide the practitioners of the main schools into about three chronological periods, on the basis of capacity,—when they were, you might say, trying in turn to walk, to run, and to fly,—you have the whole thing in a nutshell."

"Then you would not bother about the school of Verona, and its precise relations?"

"Not if it puzzled my head very much. I

should set it down as an incipient Venetian school, and put in my time some other way to better advantage."

This was the manner of their talk: his, considerate, almost tender, and informing without pretense; hers, sprightly, fanciful, and above all feminine. Sometimes she rose and yielded him her seat for a moment, that he might take observations of the progress of the work from her point of view, while her light drapery rustled on the polished floor about him. Once, for the purpose of some comparison, she had him stand at the opposite side of the room, while from her place she measured his figure by holding up her pencil and keeping one eyelid closed with two taper fingers. At another time he placed himself at a little distance, for her to make a rapid sketch of his head and shoulders in a certain position.

"This is not to be a finished likeness, you know," said she, regarding him quizzically, as the work drew to a close. "You are not particular about having the nose in, are you?"

"Not at all,—don't mention it. You might omit the eyes and mouth also, if it is any object."

"I have them in already; they are not so hard to do as noses."

Then she showed him a remote resemblance to himself, much flattered. He carried it off, after

the emergency for which it was needed was over, and cherished it as one of his principal treasures.

That day it happened he forgot there one of his sketch-books. She took it home with her own materials, and restored it to him on the occasion of his next visit. In turning over its leaves, enjoying the slight drawings full of feeling and delicacy with which it was filled, she came upon a copy of verses upon a scrap of paper, evidently never intended for public inspection. They were in his own handwriting. The paper bore a scribbled date near that of the memorable interview at Paris, in May.

There was every indication that they were his, and the motive of them no other than herself. She wondered at their extravagance, but was touched by it. She said, "Poor fellow!" and shivered a little at their direful suggestions, which she devoutly hoped had never been anything more than the poet's permissible exaggeration.

## X.

## THE ARENA.

**W**ITHOUT bending her attention to the details, Alice supposed that it was in the ordinary course of things that she should marry. She had not as yet cherished any excessive sentimentalism about it. She was not inclined to demand one only ideal being, pre-destined for her from all time, as she for him. Possibly there were within her potential circle a number of gentlemen of unexceptionable character, fortune, and social position, who would make excellent husbands and improve upon acquaintance. It was to some such orderly marriage — perhaps with one considerably her senior — that she had been accustomed to look forward, if she looked at all. The feeling, therefore, of the two ardent young men, if she could have seen it in its full intensity at this time, would have called forth her wonder and even some consternation. She

was ever reluctant to construe quickly indications that might seem to point in this direction. Of the feeling of Castelbarco she had only a faint suspicion, and of its seriousness none whatever. Such as it was, however, it was sufficient to make her more and more averse to his exaggerated politeness, his open admiration, and his gifts.

The aim of Castelbarco was now to find a suitable opportunity to make to Alice his impassioned offer. But it was not easy to secure, since the party at the *Torre d'Oro* had most of their occupations in common, finding in companionship an added zest. He did not wish to seek a formal audience, through apprehension that its object might be divined and the case decided, perhaps adversely, beforehand. He had much of the experience of Detmold at Paris, aggravated by the chafing of his more impatient nature. Alice was sometimes alone, it is true, at the *Museo Civico*, and returned unaccompanied; but Castelbarco, whose taste ran very moderately to the fine arts, knew only of the *Museo*, from some past experience, as a crowded school, where there was no privacy. In the attempts he made to encounter her in the street, he had had the fortune to find her accompanied by Miss Lonsdale, her French *cicerone*, or by Detmold, who seemed to have been drawing at the *Museo* also.

The pleasant evenings in the parlor of Mrs. Starfield went on as usual. Hyson, returning from a flying visit to Milan, gave an account of some theatrical performance he had witnessed there.

"But why have we no theaters here?" inquired Alice. "It is strange that in so large a city we have yet found nothing of that kind to attract us."

"There are, at the right season, I suppose," answered Hyson; "but in summer they usually close up, and the actors take a vacation."

"Yes," said Castelbarco, in his elegant stilted diction; "profuse operas and ballets are set forth at the Filarmonico at their fitting seasons,—notably during the Carnival. The dramatic art, also, is sufficiently well exemplified in five others. At present, we have of it nothing save a poor summer theater in the Arena."

"The plays there are pretty fair, as well as I can make out," remarked Hyson.

"They are not literary or excellent; they are esteemed by us of a low grade," said Castelbarco, with an air of compassion.

"It would be novel and interesting to see one, nevertheless," said Alice.

"Will the Signorina Starfield do me the honor to accept an invitation?" asked Castelbarco,

upon whom it flashed that there might be in this the opportunity he coveted.

Alice said, hesitatingly, "Yes — certainly — if the rest will go, I should like to very much."

The idea was accepted as a good one, and it was arranged that the four — Detmold was not present — should go on the following afternoon.

The Arena is a great oval ruin, similar to the Coliseum at Rome in construction and only second to it in size. It has held forty thousand people to welcome the triumphal entry of a king since modern Italy has had the fortune to have one. The arched passages beneath it are gloomy and drip with moisture. Some of them are used for shops of various sorts. In one may be purchased antiquities and the fossil fishes of Monte Bolca. The summer theater is a shabby little affair of wood, in the open air, with a few rows of benches about it; the whole a mere box set down in the midst of the vast amphitheater. The scenery, in the searching daylight, was peculiarly wan and ragged.

The performance began at six, and only the concluding portions needed the assistance of lamp-light.

Our friends entered through a soiled turnstile to a select situation, secured by the payment of a small addition to the billet of ingress. Close by

them sat a young priest in a silk habit, accompanied by a pretty, vivacious young lady whom they took to be his sister. The audience consisted largely of soldiers from the garrison, for whose benefit a special low rate is fixed by law.

On all sides stretched back the innumerable rows of lonesome steps which once served as a quarry to whoever would avail himself of the material. Later on the noble monument was the place of deposit for all the garbage of Verona. The Visconti in their time turned an honest penny by renting it out for duels, at twenty-five Venetian *lire* a head for the privilege.

The sun was still bright, and the spectators sheltered themselves with fans and parasols until it should have gone down behind the edge of the great encompassing wall.

“Poor old battered structure,” said Hyson, sympathetically, “how respectable it is yet! I wonder if this is a fair contrast between the ancient and modern style of doing things. There is their theater, and here is ours. It is like a tooth-pick alongside of a man-of-war, or a penny torpedo in presence of a ton of dynamite.”

“They might have had a few magnificent buildings like this, superior to anything of ours,” said Miss Lonsdale, “but in what an immense number of respects we surpass them! Think

of the comforts, conveniences, and luxuries by which we are surrounded, of which they had no conception!"

"I am not so sure of that," said Hyson. "I thought so once, myself. In my school days I had a dreary idea of the Greeks and Romans as forlorn individuals hanging around in some great temple or coliseum, with no place to go to at night but perhaps a hay-stack or dry-goods box. It is simply because a few great monuments remain, while the surroundings of every-day life, everything that was ephemeral, have perished. But the probability is that they had Paris Opera Houses and Albert Halls, brown-stone fronts, quail on toast, dresses from Worth's, morning germans, the redowa, and everything else of the first water, like ourselves. It is not reasonable to suppose — even if we had no other means of judging — that the ancients put up a great amphitheater here and there, and scrimped themselves on everything else, but rather that the rest of their furniture was on a scale corresponding."

"The Arena has associations equally great with those of antiquity," said Castelbarco, to hold his share of the discourse. "It is said to have furnished to Dante, by its vast concentric circles and its exits and entrances at different heights, the plan of his *Inferno*."

“Dante was an old gentleman who had a true conception of what it was to be a poet,” remarked Hyson.

“I should think so, indeed,” said Castelbarco, in whom this flippant tone produced a displeased expression.

“It was down below, in one of those very archways, that he committed the assault and battery that should endear him to the heart of every author who is interested in accurate piracy, whether there is an adequate copyright law or not.”

“I am afraid I do not understand,” said Alice.  
“What was it about?”

“An old party was misquoting his verses,” continued Hyson, “a blacksmith, or something that way, singing and blowing his bellows and misquoting away as hard as ever he could. Dante steps in and begins to throw horseshoes, pincers, sledge-hammers, anything that came handy, at his head.

“‘Hallo! Stop! Murder!’ said the blacksmith.

“‘I won’t stop,’ said Dante.

“‘Well, what do you mean? what is it all about?’ exclaimed the blacksmith, dodging an anvil.”

“Oh, an anvil?” said Alice. “Is your account strictly historical?”

"Well, a grindstone, then," consented the narrator. "'Yes,' says Dante, 'I won't stop.'

"'Why not?' says the blacksmith. 'You will break everything all to pieces.'

"'Just what I want to do,' said Dante; 'you have misquoted my verses, sir; you have damaged my property, sir. I shall use yours the same way you use mine.'"

But now the curtain rose, and general attention was drawn to the stage. The main feature of the entertainment that awaited them was set forth in the play-bill:—

**GRAND RECITAL, FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE WORLD-FAMOUS  
CHARACTER ACTOR**

LUCIANO BOLDRINI.

The dramatic company Emanuel-Castali, under the direction of the renowned manager Giovanni Emanuel, will present

## A POLITICIAN OF THE DAY.

COMEDY IN FOUR ACTS BY CESARE CASTALI, HIS VERY LATEST.

PERSONS.

		PLATE 3.	
The Candidate	.	.	L. Boldrini.
Rosita	.	.	E. Cartali.
The Burgomaster	.	.	F. Tilche.
The Doctor	.	.	C. Tamberlani.
Lucian	.	.	S. Meschini.
The Viscount Fabris	.	.	G. Gagliardi.
The General Corlio	.	.	G. Prodocini.
François	.	.	N. Pasquali.
Gasparo	.	.	P. Ruppi.
Adelaide	.	.	A. Boldrini.
Carmosina	.	.	R. Emanuel.

The comedy was preceded by a broad farce which depicted the impositions of a charlatan at a country fair. He gave out that he cured all diseases and infirmities without pain. "Without pain! without pain!" he shouted, striding up and down with a prodigious swagger. "Who will be the next to submit a headache, a tooth-ache, a cancer, a distorted limb, to the unfailing skill of the celebrated Doctor Abracadabra, who has practiced in the families of all the crowned heads of Europe, Asia, Africa, Sicily, and the United States of America? Without pain! without pain!"

His final exploit was to draw for an astounded rustic, by means of a string attached to the ball of a pistol, which he fired off, a huge wooden tooth, but little less in size than his head.

The little party from the Torre d'Oro were seated with the ladies in the center and the gentlemen upon each side. Castelbarco was next to Alice. He could speak to her in low tones without being overheard. Her perfumed muslin robe touched him. Her small gloved hands lay crossed in her lap. He held above her a parasol, the tempered light through which suffused her complexion with a soft radiance that might have been thought to emanate from within. He ventured a number of compliments, the delicacy of which

was perhaps lost in transit through an unfamiliar tongue, since they came forth almost offensively overpowering. She could give by her presence, he said, merit equal to the best to the rude representation they were witnessing. Her beauty, also, was capable of redeeming the homeliness of such or any other surroundings. An ingenious compliment may imply matters which if directly stated are nauseating.

"I must tell you that I am not in the least vain, Mr. Castelbarco," said Alice. "When I hear such things I never believe them."

"But if they are truly meant, dear Miss Alice, and not mere empty sayings," said he, honestly.

"So much the worse;" she replied.

In the Politician of the Period was shown a gentleman — personated by the renowned character actor Luciano Boldrini himself — who was endeavoring to secure an election to Parliament. The wife of the renowned character actor, the Signora Boldrini, played Dolores, his daughter. She had several lovers, all of whom and their influence the candidate tried to secure in his favor by alternate encouragement of their aspirations. It would appear from the Politician of the Period that the exercise of the suffrage in Italy, limited as it is, is scarcely more free from demagogism and truckling subserviency than among ourselves.

The candidate remitted old debts, loaned money, bought goods freely that he had not the slightest need of, forced his family to brim over with affability to persons they detested, made promises for the future regardless of all normal capability of fulfillment, and after all was—lamentable result—defeated.

The pace of the dialogue seemed bewilderingly rapid, but with the aid of interpretations of Castelbarco they were able to follow it with considerable satisfaction.

One of the lovers of Dolores, called Ruppi on the bill,—he came so near to it that Hyson named him Guppy,—was a shambling youth who when refused by the object of his admiration wept abjectly, using a vast expanse of red handkerchief, at which the audience were much amused.

“It would be interesting to know,” said Hyson, speculatively, “just why we laugh at this one and sympathize with the other two. He is a well-meaning, honest fellow. Here he is, thrown off his center, completely upset in his dearest project. He does not dress as well or strut as loftily as the high-toned ones, but I will venture to say that his misery is just as keen as theirs.”

“He is a ridiculous, impudent fellow,” said Castelbarco.

"Of course we know his misery will not last long ; that is one reason," said Miss Lonsdale. "He makes us laugh, and so we think very little of him. Perhaps we really ought to think more of him on that account, because he has done us a service. Humorists get a good deal of consideration, but I have sometimes thought not the kind, after all, to which they are entitled. They lighten the burdens of life so much that it would be fair to look upon them as physicians and systematic philanthropists. To say nothing of the great writers who are humorists and something more, I think Artemas Ward, Mark Twain, and the Danbury News Man have a much better claim to statues than a great many who get them."

"Miss Lonsdale and I have turned philosophers," said Hyson. "That is my opinion. I am in favor of the statues. I even go further. I wish to see a bust of the Jumping Frog in Central Park and a colossal group of the Nelson Street man putting up his stove-pipe on the Pincian."

"But Mary was serious," said Alice, bending forward to look at him, reproachfully.

"So am I, I assure you," said Hyson.

For the last act of the piece the footlights and a chandelier were lighted. The stage was a spot of brightness, while all about remained obscure.

At the conclusion the audience strolled out under the old arches and over the old pavements much in the same way as the Roman subjects of two thousand years before, perhaps exchanging not greatly different gossip ; the tall soldiers might have belonged to the tenth legion of Germanicus instead of to Victor Emmanuel's foot-guards. The visitors lingered, and with the permission of an attendant climbed the measured grade of the ancient steps to see the lights of the city and its silhouetted outlines from the top of the wall. While they gazed, the great tawny disk of the moon emerged above the hills. A military band began to play in the piazza below.

They descended and passed deviously up the Via Leoncino, the Via San Sebastiano, the Via Capello, — the foreign streets whose names fall so softly from the tongue. After the heats of the day, all was animation. Fruits, ices, *mischio*, could not be dispensed rapidly enough at the cafés. The fountain splashed in the Piazza Erbe. Hyson kissed his hand to the statue, in passing.

“ She seems to me a faithful old guardian, standing there in all sorts of weathers,” said he. “ Out-of-doors seems less lonesome.”

“ If we could only have a glimpse of the tombs of the Scaligers by moonlight, before re-

turning," suggested Miss Lonsdale; "it is such a lovely night."

"Let us first take some ices," proposed Hyson.

They passed under the Volta da Barbaro, an archway signalized by the murder of an estimable prince in its shade. The greater part of the Piazza de' Signori was in shadow. The moon began to wage with the brilliant lights of the café a calm contest in which it knew it should, later in the night, be victorious.

"This is the spot where I first met Detmold, whom I had not seen before for years," began Hyson, as they sipped their ices; "and also, now that I think of it, my friend Antonio, who did me the honor to take me for a lunatic."

"Oh, no, not a lunatic!" protested Castelbarco.

"I was tired, from being cramped up all day in a railway carriage, and indulged in some amateur elocution,—that is all. The place impressed me, when I first came into it, like the stage of a theater."

"It is theatrical; I have often remarked it. Is it a dagger as I see before me?" mocked Alice, waving her spoon, with an infinitesimal portion of ice in it, and then placing it between her white teeth.

“Good!” said Hyson. “You have a genius for tragedy. I engage you for my stock company.”

“There is Mr. Detmold!” exclaimed Miss Lonsdale, as a shapely figure arose at a table near by.

“So it is,” said Alice; “and papa and mamma, too, as comfortable as possible. It is evident that *our* company is not necessary to their happiness.”

But the others observed them also, and the two parties amalgamated.

“Come,” said Hyson, “you shall all join my company. Your daughter, Mr. Starfield, is a queen of tragedy. You shall be the heavy father; Detmold the young leading man, Miss Lonsdale the first walking lady and *confidante*, Antonio the”—with a good-natured sarcasm at the expense of the serious young man—“the light comedian, Miss Alice the young heroine and loveress, and Hyson,” slapping himself complacently on the breast, “the villain.”

“Perhaps you flatter yourself,” said Alice. “Are you sure you are wicked enough?”

“There ought to be an Italian villain, according to all the precedents,” said Miss Lonsdale. “Our travelers always represent the country as full of wickedness.”

"I will not resign in anybody's favor. I know my own qualifications, I suppose. Besides, I do not agree with our travelers if they say that. I have not met a much straighter and honester set of people anywhere than these Italians,—and I do not say it under compulsion from my friend Castelbarco, either."

The party presently arose and moved on under another archway to the tombs of the Scaligers.

These tombs of a splendid line of princes are in a small paved court by the side of a church. A lofty grille, which is a miracle of the metal-worker's art, surrounds them. The sarcophagus of the first of the line is as simple as the origin of its occupant,—a hardy soldier who carved his way to fortune with his sword. Can Grande, the fifth in descent, who received Dante at the most magnificent court in Italy, rides upon his war-horse, in full armor. But the crowning glory of the whole, the monument that embodies the essence of Gothic richness more fully than any other, is raised above the ashes of one who gained and preserved their inheritance to his sons by a double fratricide. It springs high into the air and supports upon its pinnacle an equestrian statue. Its whole mass is fretted with such complicated loveliness of canopies, gables, niches, sculptured saints, armorial bearings, crockets,

flowers, and finials, as if it would charm Heaven into forgetfulness of the awful guilt of its founder. The inclosure was shut at that hour. Our friends stood without and conversed softly. In such a scene Detmold spoke with involuntary eloquence. The moonlight played amid the rich tangle of sculpture, and here and there threw out the spider lines of the grating like a pattern of lacework against some deep shadow within. The sculptured warriors reposed upon their tombs with folded hands, as if in an enchanted sleep.

XI.

IDYL OF AN ITALIAN HILL-SIDE.

**N**EARLY a month had now glided pleasantly away. The copy by Alice of the head of the hale and florid warrior at the Museo was approaching completion. Her father — greatly aided in his labors by the kind assistance of the elder Castelbarco — was bringing his researches into the methods and economies of the silk manufacture to a close. Nothing remained to require the longer stay of the party at Verona. They purposed to pass a few days at Venice, and then turn back to Switzerland.

The Castelbarcos fixed an evening, shortly in advance of the time selected for the departure of their friends, to hold an assembly in their honor. It was also a day or two before the three young men were to make their visit to the farm on the canal of Este, in response to the invitation of Signor Niccolo. The original appointment had

been somewhat extended on account of an illness of the good old gentleman, who was now recovering.

Besides the movements hitherto noted, the party at the Torre d'Oro had made most of the short excursions that the neighborhood afforded, and also some others to a distance. They had been to Padua, where the Castelbarcos had a younger son at the university, had embarked at Peschiera and sailed up the lake to its terminus at Riva, and had spent a day in a trip to the bathing beach of the Lido at Venice. There remained only an expedition, which had been for some time planned, to gratify a desire of the young ladies to see something of the silk culture at close quarters.

They set forth one bright morning, when the heat was tempered by a light breeze, northwest to Torri, near the shore of the lake. A Veronese gentleman whom Mr. Starfield had ~~met~~ had an estate there, which he assured them his agent would be delighted to place at their disposal. Detmold was of the party, by invitation of Mr. Starfield, to replace his wife, who preferred to remain at home. The party consisted, then, of Alice and Miss Lonsdale, Mr. Starfield and Detmold. Two stout horses and a swarthy, ill-shaven driver, of much volubility when his in-

gratiatory comments were encouraged, conducted their carriage.

The road mounts and descends by turns through a country wild and picturesque and an expanse of highly cultivated gardens. They passed through Bardolino and Garda, each with its artificial port for the protection of its small craft from the blue and poetic lake, which rages not rarely with the traditional fury of a woman scorned.

Our friends, having no exacting plan, pursued such a desultory course as pleased them. They paused to gather flowers, to drink from a clear, running spring, to inspect the interior of some vine-shaded habitation, or to exchange greetings with some pretty peasant spinning with a distaff as she walked. They noted at one time the tall figure of a woman, with a blue robe and corn-colored hair, waving them a salutation with a handkerchief, from a balcony. She remained so long immovable, with the white handkerchief drooping without a flutter, that they were astonished. It was only upon a nearer approach that they discovered that damsel, balcony, and all were but an exaggerated trick of external frescoing.

The villas by the way were embowered in plantations of aloe, acacia, and lemon, the fragrance

of which filled the air. Back in the hills are pastures where herdsmen as brown as the savages of America keep their flocks; and higher still, forests and precipices, and gorges where mountain streams tear under wild bridges, on their way down to keep the blue lake always at the level of its golden brim. There are lonesome Scaligerian castles with forked battlements, and remnants of ancient walls climbing vine-terraced slopes to their bases. In this district the mulberry flourishes luxuriantly, and the silk-worm spins with its greatest delicacy.

The voluble driver pointed out here and there on the way the scene of a crime, a skirmish, or some romantic tale of love, or told them stories of the brigands of former times. He knew the brigand signals,—the turn of the eyes to the left, the hand extended with the palm up or down, and the peculiar call-note by whistling between the thumb and forefinger. Alice insisted upon learning them,—including the whistle, of which she made only a limited success,—and numbered them henceforth among her accomplishments.

The agent of the Veronese gentleman was an agile little man of excessive politeness, which, under the stimulus of the bright eyes of Alice, he exerted to the utmost. The visitors found

the silk-worms spread out upon wicker frames, champing vigorously at their succulent food. To see that they come to no harm, to regulate the sun and air and the fineness and quantity of their food, and to renew their beds of leaves so that there may be nothing deleterious to their best activity, is an occupation of the greatest necessity, yet combining many of the elements of that *dolce far niente* in which the brown peasants traditionally delight.

“The silk, signoras and gentlemen,” said the agent, “is the most rapid of crops, and, if it were not for the occasional epidemics that prevail; one of the most profitable. A pound of *bacchi*, which cost but two and a half francs, and are distributed at first, in appearance like black grains of sand, in a space of nine square feet, cover at maturity two hundred and sixty square feet, and produce sometimes one hundred and fifty pounds of cocoons, at a franc and a half the pound. As to the mulberry-tree, on the leaves of which they feed, it costs less than a franc. It bears leaves fit for stripping in the fifth year, and continues till the twentieth.”

The people engaged in this culture were found in large, well-ventilated habitations. It is a sanitary condition demanded by the delicate creatures who spin the thread of the locality’s

destiny. They can endure no conditions unworthy of the charming fabric they produce.

The travelers declined the further hospitality of the agent, and drove, by a grassy road, to a situation near a partly ruined farm-house in a remote quarter of the estate, to take their lunch in the open air. It was upon the slope of a long hill that rises to the Monte Baldo and commands a wide prospect. The house had once been of some importance. There were traces of a polished stucco on the walls, and the remains of a sculptured fire-place. There were holes for musketry in the upper story, pierced by troops who had used it as an outpost in recent wars. Milk, cheese of the *stracchino* variety, and fragrant wine and honey were obtained here, which, with the comfortable hamper brought from Verona, were borne to the shade of a square vine-trellis, in which there was a weather-beaten table.

The repast went on happily, but sedately. There was no one like Hyson to convulse the company with uncontrollable merriment. Mr. Starfield indulged in short disquisitions from the stores of his ripe experience, or rallied the young ladies with quiet humor. In this he called upon Detmold to help him. As the custom is in this kind of raillery, those who loved each other dearly feigned hostility, and pretended to believe



derogatory things of each other. In return for some playful thrust, Alice held up her hand and made to Miss Lonsdale the brigand signal which indicated that both of the gentlemen were to be dispatched instantly.

The red wine glittered in its polished bottle ; the sun threw down the patterns of the vine leaves upon the white table-cloth. Their driver had eaten the portion allotted to him, at a distance, and stretched himself out to sleep.

In Italy all is openness and sunshine, adverse to mystery. Even its superstitions have been in keeping with its climate. It has nourished fair traditions of fauns and dryads and mountain-nymphs ; the gloomy hobgoblins, were-wolves, and dark huntmen of the North have found little countenance. Under this potent influence, upon the friendly Italian hill-side, the old secret of Detmold was no more than a remote, well-nigh vanished figment. Contentment seemed hatching out as if from a genial incubation of nature.

Mr. Starfield went away to hold some conversation with the peasant farmer. Miss Lonsdale dozed over a copy of Corinne, to the hum of bees in a neighboring thicket. Alice and Detmold moved to a clump of walnut-trees, and rested at ease in their shade. Upon the face of a gray rock, scintillating with bits of mica, quaint liz-

ards of dusty green darted up and down. Narcissus and euphorbia bloomed near by, and the azure myosotis in the hollows. The pensive figure of a shepherd with his staff, on the edge of the hill-side, at a distance, was projected against the sky.

The influence of the scene, the languor of the atmosphere, the sentiment of isolation in this far-away country, the consciousness of mutual regard,—and, on one side, of admiring devotion,—combined to draw the couple nearer together than ever before. The topics upon which they discoursed were not greatly different from usual, but more than ever did a subtle tenderness pervade the accents and give the words a truer meaning. At times they paused and rested, with half shut eyes gazing off in sympathetic silence upon the prospect. Below lay the expanse of the azure lake; on the other side, the mountains. Out of the void of the serene sky beyond all twinkled at times, as if a signal from some moving speculum, a flash from some unseen ice peak of the Alps. Detmold's straw hat, pushed carelessly upon the back of his head, encircled his face like an honest aureola. Flecks of light spattered through the overhanging foliage upon the muslin dress of Alice. The sprays of her floating hair took in its shining the aspect of a luminous mist.

Estates here are greatly subdivided, and the whole covered with the landmarks of more than two thousand years. There were owners down in the district below having each but a few square yards of lemon plantations, from which they drew a moderate livelihood.

"Do you like this swarm of landmarks," asked Detmold, "this endless succession of proprietorships, these incessant evidences of the occupation of the land from time immemorial?"

"Oh, yes," said Alice; "it gives everything such a human interest. So much of our own country seems soulless on account of having no such associations. Our cultivated land has been redeemed from untrodden wildness so lately that it is almost as if it were only just created."

"We have as lovely scenery," said Detmold, "but it is not yet furnished. These real antiquities can not be put in at all, but probably in a hundred years, or less, our beautiful lakes will be as abundantly provided with villas and terraces, Cornice roads and lateen-sailed boats, as this. Take Lake George, now; it is capable of almost anything."

"I like very much," said Alice, "the keeping account of one's ancestry, which is so easy here. The humblest person can trace his a long way back. I wish I could mine, even if there were

nothing remarkable in any part of it. I do not mean in order to set up a coat-of-arms, and think one's self better than others, but merely as a satisfaction. We only know that papa's great-great-grandfather came from England and settled in Connecticut. There is no clew to anything back of that. He might as well have waded ashore out of the sea."

"Do you think very much more of one for an imposing descent, Miss Alice?"

Lying at her feet, free from scrutiny, he dared to essay so much of a test. Had her gaze been fixed upon him, he could not have propounded the inquiry.

"I am afraid I used to much more than I do now," she replied. "I have been disappointed in the physical results of the system, as exhibited in its best examples, since coming abroad. Have you not also? And it does not appear that the results mentally are any better. There are dukes and duchesses, and counts and marquises, as homely as they can be, and anything but stylish. I supposed that there was an *air* about them,—an exclusive elegance entirely out of the question for people in general. There are really plenty of just as distinguished-looking persons on the street at Lakeport every day. Still," she continued, "I would like to have a tall family

tree to climb up. What is a great-great-grandfather? Mine was something in the Revolution; the next was college president, the next was a merchant, and then my father, who is a merchant too. That is all there is of us. It is very provoking."

"But consider all the people who have not even a grandfather, Miss Alice," said Detmold, "and how well they get along. The self-made man is our corner-stone. We like him so well that we do not care very much who his father was."

"Of course not," assented Alice. "I am sure I never think of it — very much."

"Still, even you may perhaps look at him a little differently from what men do. Women, if you will allow me to say so, perpetuate most of the snobbishness in the world. They do not mix enough with all sorts of people to find out what fine character often lies hidden under appearances that society could not think of tolerating. And they are not, like us, — as I am happy to say, — engaged in a general scramble for money, skill in the attainment of which entitles its possessor to respect, no matter who he is."

"There is only one circumstance in the way of ancestry which I am disposed to make an obstacle of," said Alice, "and the feeling is more in-

voluntary than intentional, — and that is crime. It runs in the blood ; you can never tell when it will crop out again."

A momentary vertigo seized upon Detmold ; the brightness of the landscape was covered as if by smoke ; his heart struck heavily against his ribs.

" It is not that I think crime should continue to be punished in the innocent," proceeded Alice. " I feel sorry for such persons, but I can not help being afraid of them. They have everything against them, and often turn out badly in spite of their own best exertions as well as those of others. You see it over and over again in children of bad parents, brought up with every redeeming influence."

" Have you known many instances ? " asked Detmold.

" Not in my own experience, but I have heard of a good many, and read of some. There is a county on the Hudson where of the descendants directly traced to a woman who was hanged for murder seventy years ago, two hundred have been actual criminals before the courts, and a large number of others idiots, imbeciles, drunkards, or paupers."

There was a considerable pause. If this involuntary tendency to crime of which she spoke

were true, was it not in his blood also? He resolved rather to be cut in pieces by inches, to die a thousand deaths, than ever to yield to it an instant. Yet at this very moment the guilt of his concealment, now that this judgment of the fatal character of the secret it covered was recorded, seemed a sensible lapsing into the gulf. But oh, could there not be this one exception? Detmold had determined to be happy. He wrestled strongly with himself and adhered doggedly to his purpose. By degrees the pall passed back from the landscape. Were they not in a far foreign country? At least she knew nothing of his secret yet; nor was there any conceivable source from which she could learn it. The crickets chirped merrily about them. A small kid came and disported near them with a lovable awkwardness. He was followed and captured by a woman from the house, who called him opprobrious epithets, laughing good-humoredly the while and displaying excellent white teeth.

“I like to think,” began Detmold, speaking again, “that there is upon the whole a general average in this matter of lineage. Ancestry does not stop, you know, at Plymouth Rock, or the Norman Conquest. We have an intimate flesh-and-blood connection with history that we are apt to forget. Some ancestor of yours and mine

may have fought against the Danish invaders with King Alfred, or been one of the piratical Danes himself. The ancestor of this one may have come to Britain with the Romans or with Phoenician traders. He may have been a Druid, and offered human sacrifices."

"Yours may, but I shall never admit that mine did," said the young lady, with a positive air.

"I withdraw the preposterous supposition," said Detmold. "We will say mine, only; and then," he continued, "his forefathers in the Orient probably bowed down 'to Nebo, Bel, and all the powers divine.' Further back yet, there was one a fire-worshiper. And so you may get back to Gog and Magog, into the chaos of history. It is singular to remember that all the time there was a man taking part who was the father of your father's father's father's and-so-forth father in a direct line of descent. And then at last you emerge out of chaos into the pure freshness of the primeval Paradise."

"It makes one feel quite cosmopolitan," remarked Alice. "Which side do you suppose your ancestor was on in the siege of Troy or the battle of Salamis?"

"I wish we knew. But now as to the average I spoke of," he continued: "does it not seem

fair to suppose that in these long lines of descent there has been an average that puts us all substantially upon the same footing? There has probably been about the same number of masters and slaves, mistresses and maids, patricians and plebeians,— high and low alternations of fortune,— among the ancestors of each of us. If for one series of generations they followed the plow, scrubbed the pot, and dressed in homespun, most likely for as many more, at some other time, they wore silk and velvet, followed the chase, abused the plow-boy, boxed the maid, and talked of Shakspeare and the musical glasses."

"I like your theory," said Alice, "especially the fire-worshiper. Perhaps there is just a spark of his reverential communion with the sun in our enjoyment of its delightful brightness this very moment."

"I think it applies just as reasonably in the particular of crimes.\* As every line of descent has its aristocrats and democrats, its wealth and poverty, it doubtless has its saints and sinners, to make a series of offsets and strike an even balance. There is no way of proving my theory, but I do not take the less comfort in it on that account. In this way, too, the wheel of fortune, of which we were speaking the other day, may make a complete round. No one individual can

experience all phases of life and circumstances, but his line of descent must come pretty near it."

"It is a very good theory," said Alice, when he had finished speaking. "I think I shall adopt it."

"It is a fancy, a speculation,—not a theory," said Detmold.

"We are better friends than we used to be, Miss Alice; do you not think so?" he said, hesitatingly, after a pause.

"Why? because I accept your theory, or speculation, or whatever you call it? No, I think we quarrel a great deal."

"I am sure I can think of nothing we have quarreled about for a long time,—nothing since the Romeo and Juliet matter, and in that you"—

"No, I think it was you," said she.

"You were excessively harsh in your judgment of the sentiment of the piece. After what had passed so—so lately, I could not help thinking that it was meant"—

While he hesitated, she went on as though he had finished: "I only meant to be severe upon such absurd sentiment as theirs was, which sprang up in a minute, without any basis. I do not understand it."

"Then you would have had more consideration if it had been represented as the growth of

years,—based upon coincidence of tastes, and admiration for character and soul as well as personal beauty?"

"I should have said that that was quite a different matter."

They talked on, coming ever nearer to the subject which was calling in the heart of Detmold for utterance. Still, the memory of his former experience and the dread that her amiability might after all be only a manifestation of implicit trust, which it would be cruel to shock, kept it timorously back. Some other time, some other place, would present itself; he would have fuller indications. But he knew that she was going away from Verona in a few brief days, and none could say when or under what circumstances they should meet again. What time, what place, so favorable as this!

This glowing afternoon upon the hillside, by the gray rock, in sight of the lake and the herdsman with his goats, was as perfect as an idyl of Theocritus. Why could it not always have lasted! How without a sigh Detmold would have abandoned forever that remote, uneasy world behind him, to pasture here his flocks and tenant the broken farm-house with a shepherdess sweeter than the honey of Bormio!

The conversation was soft and poetic; it would

have taken little to versify it. Like Daphnis and Chloe they took up in turn the strains of beauty, love, and life's aspirations, and all seemed about to mingle at the close in an exquisite harmony. Alice, who had something of a Thackerayan repugnance to the demonstrative expression of feeling, however genuine, did not entirely relinquish her tone of banter. She said flippant and mocking things, but they were cynical only in form. Some unfettered emanation from a true and generous heart belied them, even as they were spoken.

One hand was thrown carelessly beside her, and lay like a lily upon the grass. Detmold had engraved an imaginary monogram with a pencil upon the stone of a turquoise ring she wore, without occasioning her to withdraw it. Then he took the tip of one of the small fingers and drew the palm into his. Still she did not oppose; she was looking off at the landscape, as if in a sweet reverie, with her head averted. He raised the hand to his lips. How different this from the despairing touch of their last parting, which had appeared to seal the decree of an eternal separation! He saw a brighter color steal into her cheek. It was not a flush of resentment, but rather of yielding and tenderness. His long pent-up emotion was upon the point of

utterance ; words of passionate affection already trembled upon his lips.

But it was fated that no word should then be spoken. Miss Lonsdale, tired of her arbor, where she had indeed taken a broken nap, with her head pillow'd upon the table, came towards them at this moment, holding Corinne open in her hand. She read to them some passages upon which she had reflections to offer. A little discussion of the work was entered upon. Miss Lonsdale liked it for its elevation of sentiment and unexceptionable tone concerning religion ; Detmold for its descriptions of nature and art. Alice admitted that by reason of having had it as a text-book in her younger days she had conceived a prejudice against it which she could not overcome ; Lord Nelvil with his endless moping seemed very stupid, and Corinne much too gifted in *bizarre* accomplishments.

Mr. Starfield came to notify them that if it was intended to have another lunch from what remained in the hamper it was time to prepare it, as the horses must soon be put to.

To include as much variety as possible they were to return by another route. The heat outside of the protecting shade was still considerable, and it was late before they left the agreeable spot. The long shadows of poplar, elm, and

myrtle stretched across the greensward. A wreath of smoke curled from the farm-house chimney. Slight purple mists began to fill the hollows of the rounded masses of foliage on the slope below. The flocks came tinkling down the mountain road.

## XII.

## THE FÊTE.

**D**ETMOLD sought an opportunity to renew the interrupted conversation on the hill-side at Torri. He could not allow Alice to go away without finally learning his fate. Who knew when they should meet again, or what changes might be effected by absence? The fête at the Grazzini palace was at hand, and he hoped much from the possibilities it offered. Could he now reasonably doubt what the result was going to be? She had been so yielding and gracious on that memorable afternoon. When the thought of his deception intruded upon his uneasy conscience he tried to dismiss it with a reprimand. Was he not himself innocent? he had not merited disgrace. If he wronged this dear girl by his concealment, he would atone for it by the achievements of a limitless affection and a tireless ambition.

Ardent as he was, he did not escape some moments of misgiving of a different kind, natural to the time. Was he ready, after all, to put the entrancing dream in which he was immersed to the test of reality? Might there not come a period even with Alice when, having lived too long the same life and thought the same thoughts, all piquancy of association would be lost and a tame commonplaceness be arrived at? His untrammelled freedom, even with its moodiness, was dear to him; the idea of conventional family routine, regular hours, slippers, an equable temperature, was slightly suffocating.

Castelbarco also was looking forward to the fête, as an occasion both to afford him the opportunity he had been so anxiously seeking, and to impress Alice with an extraordinary idea of the dignity of his house.

The affections of the two young men were similar, yet unlike. It could hardly be said that one was more genuine and all-pervading than the other. With Detmold it had been the steady growth of years; into the more fusible nature of Castelbarco, seemingly long prepared by the circumstances of his condition, it had flashed with sudden intensity; but it possessed both equally. There was this difference, that Detmold looked up to Alice with reverence, as a superior being,

— in social station as in all other respects ; while Castelbarco, who in contracting such a marriage would have gone counter to the wishes of his ambitious mother, and stepped a little down from his fancied gentility, felt in his purpose a trace of condescension. Yet how worthy was not the beautiful American of even a thousand-fold greater sacrifices ! His pride in her companionship would have been scarcely less than Detmold's.

There was a corresponding difference in the states of mind with which the two looked forward to the coming interview. Detmold, with all the sweet omens he possessed, did not cherish absolute certainty ; Castelbarco, with little in his favor but his own consciousness of merit, was serenely confident. As between the two, Detmold, who knew so well the pain of hopeless love, had for Castelbarco nothing but sympathy ; while the latter entertained towards his old schoolmate, as he now did towards every one much favored with the society of Alice, an uneasy feeling of jealousy, which would quickly have become hatred had he suspected the truth as it really was.

The Grazzini palace, during the declining fortunes of the family, had undergone many changes and abasements. The present occupant, though perhaps able to do so, had not yet repaired them.

Two of the wings were sequestered to common uses. The grand stair-case was closed up, and the space utilized in some other way. The stair-case by which one mounted at present was of flag-stones four feet in width, and provided with an iron hand-rail. On the evening of the fête a rich carpet was thrown down upon it, to shield from its harshness the rich material of sweeping robes and rosetted boots of satin and kid.

The principal saloon was a noble apartment, lighted by tapers in a chandelier of crystal. The floor, of polished parquetry bordered with a mosaic of tiles, gave back reflections. The walls were hung with faded yellow satin. The paneled ceiling, of dark wood and gilded moldings, contained frescoes of angels and prophets around a main composition showing a sea-fight of one of the old Grazzinis with the Turks. There were frequent portraits and other paintings along the walls, and, disposed between them, oval mirrors with candles in sconces, carved chairs, and cabinets holding china and bronzes. At the upper end, let into the wall and surrounded by an ancient frame of beaten copper, was a pier-glass of peculiar elegance. Its depths were filled with the rich, dark tones of the apartment, across which now glided, with increasing frequency, the sheen of silken costumes, merging

into a soft jumble of moving color. The center of the room was occupied by two circular divans. Along the sides were dispersed chairs and *fauteuils* of modern fashion, with coverings of blue and white chintz. At one side a row of windows opened upon balconies. The air at intervals lifted the curtains of silk, which swelled and rustled together as though engaged in some mysterious converse of their own.

The society encountered by our friends at the Grazzini palace was not far from the best the city afforded. There were titles of nobility: a marchesa and a baroness, and a Spanish count and countess who had been in Mexico with Maximilian. The musical termination of the names announced by the tall footmen was in itself a pleasure,—Bianchi, Carpasso, Cavalcanti, Ruzzanti. The assembly differed less from American social gatherings they knew than might have been the case in some localities of a less pronounced commercial character. Neither in Lombardy nor elsewhere does a nobility which has never looked upon the bearing of arms as the only worthy occupation so exclusively as some others abstain entirely from relations to manufactures and trade. An heiress of New York has even married a prince who kept the books of a bank.

There were handsome, athletic officers of the garrison, and two or three courtly ecclesiastics. The young society men, with opera hats under their arms, bent over the ladies on the divans, and addressed to them conventional drawing-room talk not differing greatly from that of London or New York.

Married ladies, in low dresses, were most numerous. They talked with vivacity, involving many small frowns, poutings, and elevations of very flexible brows. Their walk was the perfection of grace. Hyson found them very attractive, and gave himself up to them with characteristic unreserve.

The young Italian gentlemen, particularly the proverbially susceptible soldiers, were equally impressed with Alice. When presented they bowed with extreme elegance, but then, owing to linguistic deficiencies on both sides, the acquaintance could progress little farther and was largely confined to somewhat inane smiling. With the Signora Grazzini and her father at her side, she held a kind of small court, and laughed at and with her admirers. Their helplessness made her look upon them—gigantic as they were—as well-meaning, harmless creatures, whom it was safe to patronize and almost to caress a little.

The elder Castelbarco passed hither and thither,

inciting merriment. Detmold stood somewhat aloof, taking in the feast of color and motion, watching the gayety of Alice with anxious twinges, and waiting for the moment that should enable him to separate her from the throng. He listened to the collision of the busy voices, and found in it something like the babbling of water, the stir of a corn-field or of forest leaves,—as though even multitudes of conventional sounds, when combining, must run into the one great voice of nature.

There are moments in such an assembly when, even to the cynic, all is exquisite. The body, wrapped only in the most delicate fabrics,—tissues of silk, linen, and gold,—seems as free from grossness as themselves. Young girls, in toiletts of gauze that envelop them dreamily, throw themselves into fauteuils with *abandon*. The air is heavy with odor of sandal-wood; the music plays with cloying sweetness. At times all seems to move in a rhythmical procession, the faces pensive, the silken garments flowing or wound about the limbs in long folds. Again, it is sinuous and irregular, with eddies; and again, the music crashes high, and it is a tossing chaos crested with a pinkish foam of lace and jewels. There are only smiles, slight pressures, flying contours, perfumes; it might be a revel of immortals in the asphodel meads.

Hyson joined him.

“Fancy,” said he, “our taking part in a ball in a palace at Verona. There is no end to this theatrical business. I feel as if we ought to be in dominos, like Romeo and his friend at the masque of the Capulets. Old Castelbarco, there, makes a very tolerable Capulet. See him stir things up. ‘What, ho! more lights! bid the musicians play! How long is’t now, good cousin Capulet, since you and I were in a mask?’”

But at this moment the hospitable entertainer came towards them, and led him away, to give him the advantage of the acquaintance of a colonel of engineers of large experience on the royal works of irrigation. Then he returned to present Detmold to the Signora Spinello and her daughter, an heiress lately come back from a convent at Paris.

The Signorina Spinello was a perfect blonde, with eyes as blue as corn-flowers. Eyebrows of a dark shade and a slight habit of wrinkling the forehead petulantly gave piquancy to a face that would otherwise have been too placid. She walked with Detmold, and they paused a moment to comment on the curious tall pier-glass.

“It mirrors a fine couple,” said the host pleasantly, passing behind them.

“Doubtless,” said Detmold; “but our atten-

tion was just now given to the mirror itself; it is very handsome."

"It is old, and there are traditions connected with it. My wife could tell you what they are, if you cared to know; as for me, I make no account of such things. The breaking of it would be a very bad sign for our house, I believe, as she interprets it."

"Or for any other, I should think," said Detmold; "it would cost a mint of money to replace it, if indeed it could be replaced at all."

His eyes wandered involuntarily at every moment after Alice, and he would have been glad to be released. All at once he saw her upon the arm of Castelbarco, his rival, whose purpose to-night might very well be similar to his own. They turned once or twice, and were lost to sight. They had passed out upon the balcony of a window opening by the pier-glass, and near the door that led into a smaller room, where there were cards for those who did not care to dance.

In a robe of silk of a pale golden tint, with lace upon her shoulders, her hair bound in a classic knot, there was no figure so princess-like as that of Alice. A gold ornament at the neck fastened a ruff of lace into which her round chin went in and out sweetly with the movements of her head.

Castelbarco would have brought her a chair to the balcony, but she declined, saying that it would be less refreshing to sit than to stand, as the air would be cut off by the balustrade. She had not been able to offer an excuse—as she would have been glad to do—that would not have offended him, when he proposed to her to seek a moment's respite from the heat of the rooms. Although she had no suspicion of what was to take place, she was uneasy, and had formed the intention to remain the briefest possible moment.

The young man leaned against the window architrave. Alice, with one hand drooping over the stone railing, looked down into the well-like street.

“Miss Starfield has enjoyed her stay in Verona, I hope?” he began.

“Oh, very much.”

“Will she ever come to Verona again?”

“I fear there is little hope of it. We sail for home in the autumn, and intend to spend most of the summer in Switzerland. I do not suppose papa could be induced to cross the ocean again, or to allow us to come without him, now that he knows what it is.”

“Then I shall never see you again?”

All this was with a decided appearance of being preliminary to something.

" You can come to America again, at some time, can you not? But it is chilly ; had we not better go in? "

" I can go to America, yes," said he, disregarding her suggestion, in his pre-occupation ; " but — it is long and far. Who knows what may happen? There is another way. I have long sought an occasion to beg you, to implore you, as I do now, to remain here — with me. I love you, Miss Alice, and I have done so since a child. It is not a little while I know you ; it is half a life-time. Even in my school-days was I charmed ; you alone made them endurable. I planned then for the future, and you were always the center of my plans, though you did not know it. When you came here so happily to our Verona, my passion was renewed, — with all the strength, now, of manhood, and all the earnestness of our race. I could throw myself at your feet, to adore you. I can not bear to have you ever go away. I have fortune, I have ancestry. You shall be so happy here that you will not miss America. Besides, do I not know the ways of your country? I will bend myself to them. You shall have here, if it please you, another America."

He stood facing her, with his hands clasped together. His manner was vehement and suppli-

catory, yet gallant and respectfully confident. As Alice did not reply for a moment, and still looked down into the street, he endeavored to steal his arm gently about her waist, and to take in his the hand extended upon the balustrade. She avoided the caress by a slow, easy drawing back.

When this supreme instant arrives to those who have known and understood each other, the momentous question seems to have been asked and answered long before. There is no crisis; there is only the fusing together of two natures yielding to attractions that accomplish their appointed end. But when a woman is addressed by one with whom she is little familiar, and upon whom her thoughts have never fondly rested, an element of gratuitous offense enters into his proposal. Unconscious, from any responsive feeling, of the depth of passionate sentiment she may have aroused in him, she finds it unnecessary and uncalled for. The lover appears as a strange, alarming person. His ardor has a ferocious aspect. He is well enough as a part of the furniture of society, but why should he wish to touch her, to lavish expressions of endearment upon her, when she takes not the slightest interest in him?

“It is very painful to me to hear this,” said

Alice, "because I can say nothing favorable in reply. You do me a great honor, but I—am sure our acquaintance does not warrant this. I could not think of it. I—hardly know you. I hope you will not pursue the subject. It would be useless. We may be friends, but nothing more."

She listened with considerable calmness to some further arguments, and her tone continued to be kindly but decided. She was much more careful of him than of Detmold at Paris,—perhaps because of valuable self-possession acquired in that very interview; perhaps because it is not uncommon to do worst when we would appear at the best advantage, and best when the approbation to be gained is entirely immaterial; and because this was something so wholly out of the question that no trace of doubt embarrassed her decision.

"Do not be so cruel, Miss Alice!" he still appealed.

"I am not cruel. It is you who are cruel. You are making me very uncomfortable. I must go and rejoin my father. It is cold here;" and she made a movement to go in.

"There is some other," said Castelbarco, behind her.

She did not reply, but her eye kindled a little, as if at a piece of impertinence.

"Oh, yes, there is some other," he repeated. "Have I not eyes? Have I not seen? The Signor Detmold is agreeable to the Signorina Starfield; from him she could easily have listened to such talk."

In a little outburst of temper, somewhat below her usual plane of dignity, Alice turned half about, and said, "If there *is* another, as you say, and you know it, why do you pursue me? You have forgotten your good breeding, sir."

Smarting with this deserved reproach, and with jealousy and disappointment, he cried, in uncontrollable rage, "Then I say you shall not be his, either,—this moping half-artist, this—yes, I say it—this jail-bird! Do you hear? His father was a convicted felon, and he himself was born in prison. Now, marry him, if you will, instead of an honorable Italian gentleman!"

"Honorable? O Heaven! And you pretended to be Detmold's friend. It is a base calumny."

"But if it were true?"

"If it were true I might never marry—I might—it is immaterial—but I should not the less regard you with utter contempt."

She stepped into the saloon, and Castelbarco followed her. The rich mirror showed his face working with passion, and hers pale and scornful. But sadder than either it showed also that of Det-

mold, who leaned against the edge of the window from which they had just emerged, — passing him unnoted, — with a countenance of extreme and pitiable despair. Searching for Alice he had come from the card-room, and stood by the entrance to the balcony at the moment that Castelbarco, in a distinctly audible hiss, had made the fatal announcement.

Out of this bright scene of rejoicing, in the far country where all seemed impregnable security, upon the very verge of the consummation of his hopes, the dark shadow of his early life swept down and destroyed him. It was as if its vague, almost dissipated filaments had been forged into a weapon of steel, with which he had been stricken in the midst of the festival. The dear light that promised to radiate enduring happiness into his life was forever blotted out.

At sight of Detmold, Castelbarco was recalled as from a trance of madness. He had not deliberately planned this revelation ; he had hardly even in the heat of his passion, intended it. He had only, at some former time, dallied with it, as a speculative possibility ; as something — not of course for a moment to be thought of — which might be used if any one had a motive for doing so, to Detmold's serious injury. He had heard the story at school as a piece of idle gossip. For

his own part, he cared nothing about it: the circumstances were vague, possibly untrue; even if true, it was all thousands of miles remote, and could in no way affect him; and Detmold was a very good fellow, whom he respected, and who had been his friend in those very school-days. But the evil he had allowed himself to contemplate had executed itself in his rage, almost in spite of him. The view of Detmold's distress moved him deeply.

"My God!" said he, "what have I done! Miss Alice — Detmold — I deny everything. I know nothing of it. It is not true."

Detmold turned feebly to depart.

"Do not go away, Mr. Detmold," said Alice, with mingled sympathy and indignation; "I do not believe a word of it."

"I must go," said Detmold. "*It is true!*"

The glance of Alice lingered painfully upon his face for an instant. Then her features contracted coldly.

At this moment an extraordinary thing happened. The great Venetian glass, in the depths of which the joyless trio saw their pain reflected, lapsed from its frame in fragments of a crystalline structure. It fell about them as if in a shower of glittering tears. The guests shrank back in alarm, and the revelry ceased.

There are said to be voices so radically jarring when directed by malignity, or it may be so intensely vibratory in supreme emotion of any kind, as to destroy the natural cohesion of particles and cause them to fall asunder. If sensibility to such a force could be supposed to inhere in this mirror of Venice, perhaps it was an extension of the quality which it was said to be able to give to certain of its drinking-glasses to make them shatter at the contact of poison.

It is not to be believed that either the malicious rage of Castelbarco or the anguish of Detmold reached to this fabulous point. It is more likely that the mirror was broken by some slow settling of the walls in which it was fixed, causing unequal strains and pressures, accelerated by the unusual weight of the merry-making company.

At the bottom of the space left vacant by its fall was a small inscription, which, dimly remembered, doubtless furnished the basis to the tradition mentioned by the senior Castelbarco. Upon being deciphered it read : —

“ When the Venice glass is broken,  
To this house is evil spoken.”

The guests drew a cordon about the scene of the catastrophe. The superstition of the ill for-

tune of a circumstance of this kind is generally prevalent, and the matter was taken gravely. The countenances of the household were deeply troubled. The host caused a piece of tapestry to be hung over the blank wall, and devoted himself ruefully to restoring the suspended festivities. Hyson picked up some of the fragments, and eyed them curiously, and then the inscription.

“A fine murdering old ancestor, truly,” said he, turning to Alice, who now leaned upon her father’s arm, “to leave such a sword of Damocles hanging,—such a dynamite machine stowed away in the wall to blow up the peace of mind of his descendants. What an old cut-throat he must have been !”

“It is no laughing matter,” said the young officer in blue and silver whom he had met at the Café Dante with Antonio on the evening of his arrival. “Just now I would rather be a Benotti as I am than a Castelbarco or a Grazzini, although they could buy us all up, and are an older family by a couple of centuries. I have seen too much of these omens,—we Italians are especially favored. They almost always turn out badly. If this accident has no further ill effects, it will at least depress our friend Antonio nobody knows how long. He is too impressionable. I am sorry for the poor boy.”

The music began again to play enchanting waltzes ; the gayety recommenced. But it was at best only a faint reflection of its former self ; the accident continued to be the principal topic of conversation. "It is only to the mother's side, the Grazzini," said some, "that the omen can apply ; probably it will come to nothing." But when they departed, it was evident that it had made upon all no ordinary impression.

## XIII.

## THE WATER FARM.

N the following morning Hyson repaired, as soon as he had taken breakfast, to the lodgings of Detmold, to consult with him about the morrow's expedition to the farm of Signor Niccolo. There was now to be a general breaking up of the company. The pleasant associations in the strange old city were at an end. The Starfields were to leave for Venice a day later, and he himself, after adding to his stock of information what Signor Niccolo might have to impart, felt that there was little requiring his presence in this locality, and hoped to meet them soon in Switzerland. He knew nothing of the painful events of the night before except the breaking of the mirror, and to that, if his thoughts for an instant recalled it, he attached no more importance than if it had been the breaking of a camp-stool or a dining-table.

As he passed through the bureau of his hotel, a message from Antonio was handed him. It was to notify him thus in advance that Antonio could not join in the excursion to Signor Niccolò's, on account of an indisposition. It assured him that everything would be done for his entertainment just as if he himself were present, and desired him a happy journey.

This was a disappointment, because he had wished to have the advantage of Castelbarco's graphic explanations both there and by the way. At the lodgings of Détmold another awaited him. The servant assured him that Detmold had suddenly gone away.

“When?”

“Early this morning, by the train to the eastward.”

“Where has he gone, and when is he coming back — to-day? Did he not leave any message?”

“He did not leave any message, Signore. He took some clothing with him.”

“That does not look as if he were intending to come back to-day. It is uncivil, to say the least,” he muttered, and turned away.

It occurred to him to call upon Castelbarco personally, to see if his illness were serious, and also to learn whether he knew anything of the cause of Detmold's sudden departure.

Castelbarco came down with heavy circles about his eyes and a sallow and disordered complexion.

"I see, I see," said his visitor; "late hours and over-fatigue. You have not had enough sleep."

"No, I was restless. I slept very little."

"I thought you were an older hand at a little dissipation than that. Still you can sleep enough to-day to make up for it, and you will be all right in the morning. I must insist upon taking you with me to Signor Niccolo's. The fresh air and the sunlight will do you good. It will make another man of you. Detmold has suddenly gone away and left me in the lurch, and I am entirely alone. If you abandon me too, I shall not get on with the farmers at all, and might as well give it up."

"Detmold has gone!" exclaimed the Italian, with sharp surprise. "Whither?"

"He left no message with his servant. I hoped that perhaps you might know something about it. Most likely he had a telegram to meet somebody somewhere, but if so, or in any case, I do not understand why he could not leave word."

"I know nothing of it," said Castelbarco.

An expression compounded of many emotions

passed over his features : there seemed to be in it pain, remorse, fear, and even a trace of triumph.

“ I have passed a bad night,” said he, “ and am now suffering ; but perhaps you are right ; it may revive me to see the open country. I will go with you.”

His countenance continued troubled during the interview. He pressed his hands together nervously, and his eyes, instead of looking at his interlocutor, gazed absently beyond him.

“ I will call for you, then, with my *fiacre*, at the appointed hour,” said Hyson, at parting, “ and we two will make the expedition.”

“ No, permit me,” said the Italian. “ We will go in one of my conveyances. I have a driver who knows the road well ; he was once a farm hand with Niccolo. It was my intention that we should go in this way.”

They were to drive instead of going by rail, as they might have done, to Vicenza, at least, in order to see the country more thoroughly, and to diverge, if they saw fit, here and there from the main road, which follows the line of the railway.

Hyson made no doubt that the depression of Castelbarco was due to some superstitious dread connected with the breaking of the mirror. It was a confirmation of the prediction of Signor

Benotti the night before. It was now his turn to indulge a slight feeling of contempt. In the evening he took his leave of the Starfields, whom he should not find upon his return. There were mutual wishes that they might soon meet again. He told them of the unexplained departure of Detmold. All joined in thinking it strange except Alice, who was more reticent on the subject than the rest, but was secretly much troubled.

She recalled the expression of his face in the mirror, the forlorn sadness of his voice. Had he gone away with some desperate intent, through the loss of her esteem or shame at the exposure that had been made? This frightful charge of Castelbarco's,—it could not be true. Why had not Hyson known it? Why, indeed, had it never interfered with the apparent friendliness of Castelbarco himself? Was it possible that one so delicate, so high-minded, so devoted to all that was beautiful and noble as Detmold, was involved in shameful connections,—was perhaps himself a criminal? She would never believe it. But then—his emotion—his own admission?

She was possessed by no absorbing affection ready to go to any lengths for its object, to share with him not only adversity but disgrace, if dis-

grace there were. Yet her interest in Detmold had grown with every moment of their pleasant intercourse at Verona, and she had been touched by his foolish verses. If it had been necessary to define her feelings towards him in these last days, it could have taken no other name than love. This was not forgotten nor abandoned, but if this that was told were true—of course—she was hopelessly puzzled. What could she think? There was something to be explained. He would write to her. There must be some favorable explanation. Yes, undoubtedly he would at once write to her, and the mystery would be dispelled. She looked impatiently for letters. The first mail brought none, nor the second; day after day and week after week went by, as she pursued her journeys, and no letters came.

In the morning, at the hour of starting, Castelbarco was much as usual, and showed little trace of his indisposition of the previous day.

The white post-road to Vicenza skirts the lower spurs of the Tyrolean Alps. It stretches between rows of fig and mulberry trees garlanded with vines, as if for a perpetual festival. The terraced hillsides climb to ruddy Scaligerian castles. There are blue mountain planes always in sight. The vegetation here is not as dense as farther

to the west and south, where Lombardy is a jungle of maize, vines, and fig-trees. The great canals are replaced by others smaller and less complete. The water in them runs more rapidly, and, though full of silt, has not the marshy aspect noticeable elsewhere. In an endless net-work of subsidiary canals and ditches it percolates merrily about the roots of the flax and Indian corn, crosses the *marcite* meadows in thin sheets, and collects in the stagnant pools of the rice marshes. Stalwart *acquainoli*, or water bailiffs, are seen striding away in the fields to see that all is secure.

The travelers passed through many a pretty village with its campanile, its red roofs, and its bold saint poised upon the dome of the church. Here and there small valleys, stretching into the hills horizontal to their course, reminded Hyson of his own distant territory. Castelbarco spoke to him of the country to the north-east, towards Bassano, as even more pleasing, and he promised himself to see it. They made a diversion to the battle-field of Arcola, over the narrow causeway which leads to it through marshes in which the Little Corporal, in the morning of his fame, floundered to his waist under the fire of Austrian grenadiers.

When in sight of the square castles of Monteccchio upon the slopes of the Monti Berici, they

turned off by a less traveled road, crossed the swift Bacchiglione below Vicenza, and towards night-fall arrived at the domain of Signor Niccolo.

During the day Castelbarco was of strangely variable humor. His mood swung like a pendulum; it was always dangerously beyond the point of equilibrium; he was gay to excess, then gloomy. He indulged in boisterous merriment, then sat abstracted, drew heavy sighs, and once Hyson thought he saw a tear steal down his cheek. He endeavored to rally him, but the effort was poorly received. He enlarged upon the capabilities of the Paradise Valley; drew comparisons; found here a mountain, there a gully or a stream, that recalled some of its features; and avowed his purpose of incorporating in it, at no distant day, all the attractive circumstances they saw about them, and more. At last Hyson begged to know if it might not be a relief—unless it were of a character that ought not to be disclosed—to state what it was that so troubled him.

“It is nothing that could be explained,” said Castelbarco. “I am dissatisfied with myself a little.”

“So are all the rest of us,” said Hyson, reassuringly, “but it does not pay to feel so. One must get in the habit of considering that although he is not altogether what he would like to be, he

is a very fine fellow compared with a great many others. But has it not something to do with the breaking of the mirror?"

"Partly that. I have apprehensions, almost a presentiment, of evil. But you must understand I am a skeptic,—I do not believe in trivial signs. Our ancestor who made such an inscription knew nothing about the destiny of his race, nor could it be in any way connected with the integrity of a material object. He must have been a superstitious man, strangely imposed upon by others."

"You reason as clearly as clockwork. I was quite certain that a straight-up, handsome fellow like you was not to be annoyed by a picayune, old woman's tradition. As to presentiments, I have had scores of them. They never come true. Once, when I had a presentiment that I was going to meet with a railroad accident, I traveled to California and back in perfect safety. Another time, when I had none at all, I was smashed up on the Harlem road, and had to go on crutches for six months."

Signor Niccolo greeted the son of his wealthy customer and his friend with effusion. "Welcome," said he; "come in. Ah, you are in season; the wheat has stalks like pipe-stems. It is a poor place, this of ours, but you shall have the best there is in it. I have been ill, but Heaven

be praised! — Come with me. You are tired. Run, Giacomo, — lazy-bones, — some cool water from the spring! and you, Taddea, a flask of the Breganze wine! You shall dine, and then Emilia shall sing you some of her pretty songs."

The house of Signor Niccolo was of rubble-stone covered with coarse stucco, tinted, and here and there painted with a madonna or a view of souls toasting in purgatory, in faded fresco. It was preceded by a court-yard and a wall, on the gate-posts of which were grotesque plaster figures. The rooms were floored with brick, except the best one, which had tiling of blue and white china. The ground rose in the rear, and then descended. At the top was a little terrace and an arbor of vines resting on piers of whitewashed brick. It was a prosperous-looking farm, with full barns and numerous cattle.

The Signora Niccolo, dark, buxom, and bright-eyed, was twenty years her husband's junior. A blooming child played about the room with chairs and strings, pretending to run a train of cars to Venice. Hyson took passage, and was soon upon such intimate terms with the engineer that he could have had a free pass upon the road indefinitely.

When the family assembled at the hospitable supper board, there joined them a young lady of

eighteen, who had lightish-brown hair, a slight figure of medium height, and demure manners. It was the pretty Emilia, a niece and adopted daughter, engaged in musical studies at Milan, but now spending a vacation at home. She had American and English fellow students, and had learned a good deal of the language, which she spoke with a quick, soft pronunciation. Taddea, a servant in a half-contadina costume, waited at table.

“ If you do not all eat a great deal,” said Niccolo, “ you will have Emilia to settle with. She has attended to the preparation of the dishes herself.”

When the cloth was removed, the old gentleman, after adjusting to his eyes a more accurate pair of spectacles, and making a great show of clearing for action, spread upon the table his maps, his plans, his parchments, his authorities upon the water rights,—a system of jurisprudence which is the growth of nearly a thousand years. At the basis is the principle that the water is indissolubly joined to the land, and can by no means be transferred separately.

“ This preliminary survey we must take,” said Niccolo, “ to understand the design of the whole. To-morrow we shall see how the theory is perfectly put in practice.”

He showed the location of his different crops, and the method of treating those to which the water is applied. He talked learnedly of the carbonates of lime, the salts of iron, the gypsum, held in suspension by the water in its course from the mountains, and brought down to be infiltrated about the roots of the vegetation. He explained the methods of payment of rent by the peasants who sub-let from the farmers,—the *affitto a mezzadria*, or payment in miscellaneous crops, the *affitto a grano*, or payment in wheat alone.

“And here is my lease,” said he, spreading out a roll, “which I receive from my landlord. It runs for nineteen years. At its commencement there was made an inventory of everything on the place, down to the last mulberry-tree. When the time expires we must make another inventory, showing how everything stands then. If something is lacking, very well; I pay for it. If, on the other hand, I have added something of value, a proper allowance is made to me for it. Here,” he went on, “is the plan of my wind-mill. Do you see how it works in cleaning the rice? The wheels raise by cogs the heavy beam A, which at the height C is let loose and falls forty-five times a minute into a granite mortar below. There are some things I shall change;

I am applying my mind to it now. I have also other attachments, by which I make it grind and do various work. Do you notice how it is located? It is but a few steps down the lane from my barns, and at my time of life every step counts, I can tell you."

Whether it was the good Breganze wine or only a return oscillation of the pendulum, Castelbarco was for the moment as cheerful as the rest. He interpreted the rapid talk of the farmer, marred by a *patois* which was mainly unintelligible to Hyson. Emilia sat by, and took a lively interest in the proceedings. She helped the *padrone* arrange his papers, or read a name or a letter for him which his old eyes were not sharp enough to pick out. Her frilled sleeves fell back, as she rested both elbows upon the table, and showed a pair of round, shapely arms. At them and into her bright eyes the student of irrigation looked, and asked her questions about music and Milan, to the detriment of the weighty matters spread out for his inspection. She said to him, in an undertone, smiling, "I fear you are not paying sufficient attention to the *padrone*."

"It is true," he replied; "but we have a saying that blood runs thicker than water."

The family retired at a good hour. Before they went Emilia sang for them some of her songs in a very sweet and flexible voice.

“When you are a great *prima donna* you must come to America, and we will give you an immense ovation,” said Hyson. “I will see to it myself. You will grow very wealthy, besides.”

“When I do,” said she, “I shall buy an immense farm, ever so much larger than this, and have orchards and vineyards and flowers,—especially all kinds of animals. I like animals so much.”

“She might be a customer for the Paradise Valley,” thought Hyson.

He tossed about uncomfortably for some time, prevented from sleeping by a warm atmosphere. He heard Castelbarco, whose apartment adjoined his own, pacing the floor. He slept, and dreamed of the pretty ways of Emilia. He awoke late in the night, and heard Castelbarco still pacing. He arose and went to expostulate with him. His candle had burnt out, but it could be seen that he had not undressed. Hyson rested lightly upon the side of the bed.

“I hope you are not keeping up those disagreeable feelings still,—presentiments and so on,” said he.

“I cannot free myself from them,” said the other, throwing himself down also.

“This comes of belonging to an old family. In our country, where it makes no difference

what family you belong to, as long as you are presentable and have money in your pocket, such a thing could never happen. It is only one more argument for our free institutions."

"It is not that alone, but its coincidence with other circumstances. Would that I dared to tell you. If one had failed in a dearly cherished project, and not only failed but incurred hatred where he most wished esteem, that would justify such a feeling, would it not?"

"It was not my intention to intrude upon your confidence," said Hyson; "but if there is any way in which I can be of the least service, I hope you will do me the favor to command me."

"Well, I will tell you all," said the miserable young man, commencing again to walk. "You shall be the judge; you shall see that I did not act with deliberation, that it was not my purpose to say the words I did. But no,—what do I promise? To speak of it is to extend the injury. You can do nothing. What is done is done."

Hyson was of a sympathetic nature, and would gladly have done anything in his power to alleviate the trouble of his friend. But this is one of the mysterious things of life, that pain constitutes a vast loneliness. No matter how close the proximity and warm the compassion of anxious hearts, the sufferer must writhe and twist alone, while

they can only marvel at what is so near yet so impervious to help.

He essayed a word or two further of cheer, and then left him, hoping sleep would produce a beneficial change. A light breeze stirred the heavy air. He looked from his window and saw the arms of the Signor Niccolo's windmill rising from behind a row of pollarded trees, barred against the sky like a great cross.

## XIV.

## THE BLOW OF A SHADOW.

**H**IS his brick-floored chamber, with its bedstead tipped with brass, its porcelain stove, and its vine-shaded windows, down in the heart of the Italian country, Hyson heard all night long slight purling noises, like the whistle of birds, as the water rippled over obstructions in its onward course. Of all sizes, down to the miniature channels that run in a plowed furrow, the canals are woven throughout the plain of Lombardy like threads of silver in a rich tissue. They give it an almost cloying fertility. They pass over, under, and through each other by sluices, bridges, and siphons without end. The smallest differences of level are taken advantage of in drawing off the water and returning it to its channels. Over and under a single canal are counted three hundred and forty bridges and passages, five of which are aqueducts across mountain torrents.

The young man dreamed of Emilia; of the Paradise Valley, which now seemed to be teeming with people and running with streams like this; of Castelbarco stalking up and down interminably in the midst of it; of Detmold, and of the dark windmill. He was awakened at day-break by the hoarse cooing of pigeons.

The coming heats of the day were presaged by a perfect hush, in which one could fancy he detected the hum of the illimitable mechanism of growth,—the opening of petals, the spreading of roots, the movement of sap, and the assimilation of chlorophyl. The unfamiliar objects outside had an exaggerated strangeness in the gray light. He arose, made copious ablutions, and looking in at the apartment of Castelbarco found it vacant. The bed had been occupied, however. Doubtless he had gone out to stroll and refresh himself in the coolness of the morning. Unable to sleep longer, he thought he could do no better than to follow the example.

He passed quietly down the stairs and out at the rear door, which stood ajar, to the terrace. The air was soft and grateful. Fine cobwebs strung with beads of dew were spun among the grass blades. He watched from the arbor the gradual bloom of the morning. Peasants came out of the buildings and began to busy them-

selves about the work of the day ; the clinking milk-cans were filled ; the stock was driven to pasture ; the fowls cackled lustily in the barn-yard. Everything was astir early, to accomplish as much as possible before the lassitude of the afternoon heats. Castelbarco was seen at a long distance, disappearing behind some shrubbery.

Hyson followed and sauntered at ease in the plantations. His meditations were mainly cheerful. If he had any pre-occupation, it was with the singular conduct of Castelbarco, and perhaps for an instant a puzzled speculation about Detmold. Of a bright, airy nature, the world had gone well with him, yet not so well as to stagnate an active mind, or to destroy his sense of the value of the good things he enjoyed. He seized not only the day, but the hour and the minute. He was enabled by his own excellent temper to extract whatever contentment there was from the most adverse surroundings. If he had his periods of depression also, they were brief, like overcloudings in April, and left no permanent trace.

He noticed every thing in his walk amongst the vegetation of the Italian farm, drew comparisons, and sanguinely forecast the greatness of his American valley when it should have blossomed into a garden like this. The sun was high

in a heaven of unclouded blue when he overtook Castelbarco. The latter was walking slowly, with his hands behind him, and crossed by a path at right angles to his own. It led by the rice marshes at the end of the estate.

“Well met!” said Hyson, cheerily. “I shall not ask after your state of mind. No one could be melancholy on such a morning, if he tried. We do right — you and I — to come out and enjoy it while the rest are sleeping. I have to attribute my pleasant walk to you. I did not think of it until I discovered your absence.”

“I was oppressed almost to suffocation,” said Castelbarco, “and came forth for relief.”

“Oh, come, come, my boy! you must not mope again to-day. Trouble is nothing only in thinking of it. Try to turn your thoughts away, and then it no longer exists. It is your liver that is out of order, or perhaps you are overworked.”

“Call it what you will, never have I been so weighed upon by uneasiness and foreboding. Perhaps — how suddenly he” —

“You must keep quiet and rest to-day instead of joining in the lively tramp of exploration I intend to lead our friendly host. The pretty Emilia will entertain you while we are gone. We shall see what effect that will have. It will be melancholy indeed if she does not dissipate it with her music.”

They followed the path by the rice marshes in single file. Low mud walls, from fifteen to eighteen inches high, with outlets, surrounded the growing crop. The thick, needle-like blades, kept most of the time flooded, showed just above the surface of the water. These fields, from which every vestige of shade is removed as hurtful to the crop, lie festering in the sun, and breed malarial poison. Too wet to plow, they must be broken up with the spade, and at the proper season the sower wades in the soft mud to scatter the seed.

“I will have no rice culture in the Paradise Valley,” said Hyson. “Perhaps I could not if I would. Labor is too dear in our country to let us mix lives freely with our products, as you Europeans, who have so large a surplus of them, can afford to.”

“Yes, it seems that there is a flavor of calamity and death even in the innocent vegetables,” said Castelbarco, with a sigh.

But now they were met by a domestic, who had come to find them, with a pair of excellent saddle-horses. The Signor Niccolo had observed them from his lookout point, and desired that they would mount, in order to have them try the horses, which he had lately bought, that they might not be too fatigued for the further rambles

of the day, and also that they might not be late for the good breakfast which was awaiting them. This exercise and the company of Hyson exerted a beneficial effect upon the spirits of Castelbarco. Another of his sudden changes of demeanor—in which, however, after the experience of the preceding day, Hyson put no confidence as a permanent recovery—ensued. He sat erect in his saddle and his eye brightened over the surrounding landscape, as they rode side by side up the hill. He apologized for his past moroseness, which, he said, was a reminiscence of an unhappy disposition too much indulged in his youth. He had exaggerated certain circumstances. He hoped that any words he might have inadvertently let fall would not be misconstrued. Then, in a flow of volubility, he talked of current light topics at Verona and elsewhere, referred to his life in America, and made plans for further expeditions and pleasures, in which Hyson was to engage with him. His hilarity, contrasted with his recent gloom, had a dash of wildness in it, and jarred a little upon Hyson's nerves. He even made clumsily humorous suggestions as to what Hyson should do in his Paradise Valley. "You Americans are fond of doing things on a great scale," said he. "Now, you must get your government to import the Monti Berici, and set them

up in your valley bodily. The proceeds will help us pay our national debt. We need it badly. Taxes are very heavy, and we will do anything for money."

"We do not lack mountains," said Hyson. "The little Monti Berici are very well, but I can show you my Sierra Nevada peaks, eight and nine thousand feet high. What I *would* like, if it were practicable, would be a sprinkling of your antiquities, — ruins, and so on. You are ahead of us in your old *bric-à-brac*, — that is all. No matter how well we are provided in other respects, I do not see how we are ever going to be very picturesque. There seems to be no purpose now, as formerly, that requires becoming structures to be set up on all the crags and inaccessible look-out points, to accent them and show the domination of the human race. We have no faith to make us build mountain convents and rock-cut chapels, and castles we shall have no need of if we live a hundred thousand years. Since we are secure, and no longer fear sudden raids by unscrupulous neighbors with arms in their hands, and since gas and water connections are of so much importance, life has come down into the low places where commercial business can be transacted with neatness and dispatch."

The horses ambled easily up the incline, which

was scored with the wheel-tracks of the wains used in harvesting the crops. The domestic buildings were near at hand. Signor Niccolo could be seen waving a salutation from his terrace. Emilia, in a wide hat and long gloves with gauntlets, was coming over the edge of the hill with the robust child to meet them. The manner of Castelbarco was now blithe and open, and his countenance was free from a trace of trouble.

His gayety had supervened, apparently, only to make the contrast of a dreadful termination the more appalling. He was to be destroyed by a shadow out of that beautiful bright morning, hardly more startling and fatal than that which by his agency had stricken down Detmold in the perfumed brightness of the fête. As the riders paced along by the row of dark trees which Hyson had seen from his window, the arms of the great windmill were suddenly loosed, and began with a sharp creak their first revolutions for the day. The broad, deep bars of their whirling shadows swept out from an opening, and diagonally down upon them across the road. The new horses, not yet sufficiently broken, as it appeared, to the strange appearances, winced and quivered a moment as if under an actual blow. That upon which Hyson was mounted bore him away in an uncontrollable gallop, nearly riding

down Emilia, who clung to the hedge for safety. The young Italian's animal, the more spirited of the two, bolted furiously into the air, and threw the rider from his seat with a wrench that seemed to dislocate every joint.

When Hyson could control his movements and return, Castelbarco lay in the road with his head unnaturally bent forward under his breast. A stream of blood from his mouth mingled with the dust. His neck was broken.

Signor Niccolo was seen running from the terrace, and peasants from the mill. Emilia was standing by, her face white with awe. The child, who held her hand, was regarding the limp body curiously.

## XV.

## DETMOLD AT TRASIMENE.

**W**HERE, in the mean time, was Detmold? Had he indeed sought refuge in the dreadful resource of suicide, as vividly imagined by the unfortunate Antonio, and even vaguely dreaded by Alice? No; his mind at the last rested upon too solid a basis of moderation and sterling common sense. He had a conception of a sturdy courage which endures the slings and arrows of adversity to the end, and esteems the attempt to escape by self-destruction cowardly and degrading. He had been schooled in unhappiness, too, and lapsed not unnaturally into a condition of which he knew well most of the dolorous phases. Yet what misery was ever so sharp as this? All that he had known of seemed trivial in comparison. To have been cast down so utterly from the very pinnacle of success! The white-sailed bark of rescue had passed him

by, as he tossed upon his spar, and left him to perish.

But short of the final point of suicide, on that night Detmold trod all the successive steps of despair. He wandered about the city, sometimes walking rapidly, then slowly, with his eyes fixed as if in a stupor. He might have been seen at Santa Anastasia, at the Castel Vecchio, or haunting the Amphitheater like an uneasy ghost. He went out upon the Ponte Navi, and, planting his elbows on the parapet, remained gazing down into the stream. It twisted under the arches in snake-like eddies. The reflection of a red lantern, somewhere down in the obscurity of the margins, surged upon the surface as if it were a liquid flame bubbling up from below. From under this rugged bridge which she had brightened with her presence, that should be forever dissociated from darkness and suffering, should he now be taken out swollen, half-decomposed, drowned at night? He dallied sullenly with the thought. The gloom and the swift water were full of oblivion and fatal sweetness. They called to him, and the tugging at his heart was hard to resist.

The first gray of daylight found him still there. He turned away homeward cold and dazed, and almost forgetting what had happened. But the implements of his labor, the accessories of his

daily life, about his chamber, all permeated with memories of her, renewed his pain intolerably. His disappointment was all-pervading and absolute, like that of a child which has longed with a desire that admits of no alternative. He rested his head against the wall for a moment. "Oh, why," he cried, "could it not be?"

He tore to pieces the sketches that came in his way. The picture which he had fancied to make of her upon a golden background, over which he had struggled so valiantly with his ignorance of the painter's technicalities, he dashed savagely down, and stamped upon it. Then, in a sudden exhaustion, he threw himself upon the bed, and slept dreamlessly for a time. His heart was heavier than lead in his bosom even before he awoke.

He resolved, the moment he opened his eyes, to go away. It was still time for the early train to the eastward. He threw a few things into a satchel, notified the servant, and was gone. At Padua he bought a ticket for the south, and plunged into the interminable tunnels of the Apennines that debouch finally above the smiling prospect of Florence. Their roaring seemed to try to out-Herod his grief. He would have liked to go on endlessly in these resounding caverns. From Florence he sped, without intermission,

towards Rome, finding in the whirling succession of objects a stupefying distraction. Half-way down, in the heart of ancient Etruria, the fancy took him to alight at one of the small walled cities near the shore of lake Trasimene. A shabby conveyance took him across the plain and up the height, and he rested at the poor inn in the small, unevenly paved square.

Without, and from a distance, the castellated hill city was as fair to see as those that figure in the backgrounds of the pictures of the early masters. Within it was rough and sordid, but everywhere picturesque. Thick-walled gray houses, with windows that were scarcely more than loopholes, grew out of the gray rock, and the misty green of olive orchards softened its rugged slopes.

Here Detmold drank the red wine of the country, — perhaps something too much of it, — and wandered aimlessly about. He saw in his walks the contadinas, with their white bodices and blue and scarlet aprons, in the tawny grain, or holding mild heifers by the horns ; or the brown, red-capped men plowing with the sacred white oxen of the classics. He poked out bits of broken antiquities with his stick. He traced the course of the conqueror Hannibal, and followed down to its junction with the lake the brook Sanguinetto, which ran fuller of blood than ever of water the

day it sluiced the shambles of the butchered consul Flaminius and his Romans.

Amid these classic surroundings, as time went on, reminiscences of his school days, long forgotten, came back, a sense of the quaint incongruity between the pictures presented of them in the dry and plodding discourse of pedagogues and the glowing charm of the originals. The low hills and neighboring mountains were of crude browns, greens, and purples, as the changing hours of the day went over their bold lines, softened by little of the atmospheric subtlety of the north. The sky above them was as opaque as the ungraded blues of the mosaics in the churches.

Detmold saw the trains sweep by to Rome, or heard them rattling afar when distant among the hills. They were full of travelers from the ends of the earth; among them, perhaps, acquaintances of his own. He had but to stretch out his hand to touch this full artery of the world's life; yet how remote did he seem from it, and from all the interests of the vast circulation of force and purpose of which it formed a part.

In the evening, at times, he took the skiff of some half-savage fisherman on the shore and pulled out upon the water. Adrift in the dusk, in the strange country, upon the lonely lake, he

listened to the cry of the bittern. He could almost persuade himself that he had passed into another state, for the moment painless, like that devised by the old theologians for infants dead without baptism. He made by degrees such acquaintances as enabled him to inspect at ease numbers of blackened old pictures of ancestors, saints, and mythological personages, which constituted part of the treasures of the place. He found himself drawn to them by the sympathy of a certain analogy. They had once been beautiful, and the light had gone out of them as it had out of his own life. He, like them, was to go on henceforth into an ever-deepening gloom.

At last, one day, a notion that was often in his head, and as often rejected as idle and worse than useless, since it could not result in putting a better face upon the matter than it already had, and might bear an appearance of pusillanimity, was allowed to have its way. It was the idea of writing to Alice. There was even a gleam of hope in it,—a gleam as pale as that of the daylight which catches upon the damp wall of a tunnel at a little distance from its mouth. He had believed her noble and generous. He had endowed her with all conceivable perfections, without having seen in her the exercise of any except those lighter ones that play

upon the surface of an untroubled life. Might it not be that she would display them now? Perhaps, perhaps—wild and far-off supposition—she would cleave to him even in disgrace. But why should *she* make sacrifices? Was he worthy of sacrifices, indeed? On his side, he would have gloried in them for her, and believed himself none the more meritorious. But she was a lovely creation, not to be theorized about on equal terms. Even in the view that she was incapable of self-abnegation for such an object, he had scarcely a shade of disparagement for her. Weakened by the consciousness of what he knew, and what she now knew as well, it was a faint heart truly that had pursued this fair lady from the first.

He set himself to present to her the details of the story as it was, to bid her a final farewell, and to extend his wishes for her future welfare. It caused from time to time the renewal of his pain in its first violence. To pluck forth the baneful secret and lay it before the eyes of her from whom it should have been forever hidden, oh, cruel task!

Days were spent in preparing statements full of qualifications, of fine analyses, of rhetoric, to palliate or throw the most favorable light upon his own conduct and that of his father, in order

to retain a shadow of a hold upon her sympathies. One after another he tore them up and wrote anew. The letter as it reached Alice at last was as follows:—

“A month has passed since the hope of happiness I had had the temerity to cherish was shattered. I do not know with what mysterious infamy I have been credited in the mean time. The effect of the disclosure was sufficiently pictured upon your face, and my admissions and my flight gave color to the worst surmises. In the bitterness of the moment, and in recognition of it as a fitting payment for my duplicity, I conceded everything. I saw only the one consequence, the loss of your esteem and the ruin of my hopes. For any trifling offsets I cared nothing. But now, in a frame of mind which is calmer, I desire to make you a brief communication. If it overstep the bounds of conventional propriety, I beg for it the indulgence of the last that will probably-ever pass between us.

“The story was told to you in a bald and malignant form by an enemy. I hid it from you, and would always have done so, because I loved you. But since concealment is no longer possible, I wish myself to lay before you the miserable circumstances in the existence of which our separation is involved. There is no other who could present to you, even if disposed, the few redeeming features of the case. I do not hope to change the judgment you have already arrived at, nor is your sympathy demanded. Only the history may, at some unoccupied moment, be the occasion of a passing reflection upon the strange inequality with which happiness is meted out, and serve to enhance by its contrast the untroubled serenity of your own lot.

"It was said to you that my father was a convict, and that I first saw the light within prison walls. With a slight modification this is true. My father was a convict. I was born to a heritage of shame, not within the prison walls, but close under their heavy shadow, which has scarcely ever for a moment lifted.

"My father was a prosperous trader in one of the smaller cities of Illinois in the early days of its settlement. Associated with him was a partner, James Belford. They were both young men of good Eastern families, and educated in the best Eastern counting-rooms. They went to the West separately, in quest of more favorable opportunities than were afforded at home. After various experiments they met and formed a copartnership. The locality was favored with a rapid growth, and they reaped the benefit of it. They became the foremost merchants of the place. The society about them was not rude, but bold and unencumbered with many of the conventionalisms of the older sections from which it had been gathered. All was dash and activity. The partners thrived so well that they were shortly enabled to return to the East and bring back young wives, who had been their sweethearts before they started out into the world.

"Both weddings were celebrated in the season of reckless profusion preceding the panic of 1847. This crash found the store of Belford & Detmold almost bare of goods. Everything was sold upon credit in the period of extravagance immediately preceding. Debts due them on all sides were worthless, and their own obligations were maturing. There was no means of replenishing their stock. They saw themselves upon the verge of bankruptcy. Their young wives, the sweeping away of the accumulations of their years of labor, the dissip-

tion of the fair hopes they had entertained, made the idea unbearable.

“They were met by a terrible temptation, and yielded to it. They endeavored to save themselves by the shameful expedient of a robbery. It was so foreign to the record and characters of both, and planned, besides, with so little judgment, that they seem to have been stricken with sudden madness. The burdens of the most abject poverty would have been infinitely lighter than the consequences which they brought upon themselves.

“It happened that there stood on a side track of the railway passing through the place, very near to their warehouse, two car-loads of goods from the East which had by some means strayed from their destination, and awaited an owner. It afterwards appeared in evidence that the merchant of a neighboring city, who had purchased and forwarded them, had died at the East during the transaction of his business. The markings were improperly made, his heirs knew little of his affairs, communications were slow, and it was a considerable time before the property was traced and looked for. The station agent at Marburg had shown the goods to them among others, and speculation was rife as to their ownership.

“It was not by my father, as I have learned from him, that the desperate idea of retrieving their fortunes by the seizure of these goods was first broached,—though that makes little difference. Nor was it adopted without long hesitation and argument. It was resolved upon one dark night when the partners sat late over their books, casting about in vain for some means of escape, and it was put in execution at once. They persuaded themselves that it was but a species of informal loan,—of a piece with the dash and enterprise of the

driving community. The property as it lay benefited no one, but it could do them an incalculable service. They were to seek out the owner afterwards, — this was the method in which they reconciled themselves to it, — and restore the full value of everything. The goods were a general assortment selected for an establishment similar to their own, and could be sold without detection. They were transferred, partly to the shelves of the store, and partly to receptacles planned in the walls of their warehouse. The cars, externally made good, showed no evidence of the robbery. A considerable time passed before it was discovered. There was no clue to the depredators. It was not until the arrival of proper inventories and descriptions from the East that the goods could have been identified even if discovered. Then the country was scoured for common malefactors. Belford & Detmold were as far above suspicion as the officers of justice themselves.

“But a detective who came from a great city to work up the case, with a full experience of the darker aspects of human character, omitted nothing from his search. The criminals were unskilled. They construed the first semblance of investigation as discovery. They abandoned the specious theory by which they had defended the act and in a complete breaking down of self-possession confessed all. It was at first deemed incredible by the community; then the industrious young merchants, who had enjoyed so fair a repute, sank to the lowest depths of infamy.

“By the connivance of officials who were softened at the spectacle of such a devastation, one of the firm was allowed to assume in court the burden of the crime, and declare the innocence of the other. The latter was to remain at large to provide for the support of the

families of both. The choice between themselves was to be determined by lot. The lot to bear the penalty for both fell upon my father. He stood forth, and obtained a momentary shade of sympathy in proclaiming, 'I alone am guilty.'

"My mother would not receive the aid of Belford. Indeed he was too broken to be capable of rendering aid. He removed to the East, and never afterwards returned. It was said that he had changed his name and succeeded well in the world; again, that he had sunk to a mere wreck and died by his own hand. We never knew which, if either, of these accounts was true, or if indeed he be not still living. My mother would have gone any lengths rather than acquaint her family with what had befallen her. She removed to the prison town, and eked out a subsistence during the three long years of the sentence, extending to my father what scanty comfort she could. It was here and thus that I was born into the world,—I who have aspired to mingle the dark strand of my life with the pleasant brightness of yours.

"But the story is not yet finished. The future of its principal actor was not that of an ordinary criminal. You will never see my father, and any opinion you may entertain of him can have no effect upon his well-being; but I would have you know something of—as it seems to me—his bravery, his effort at reparation. And yet, in every word in which I praise him I convict myself of selfishness and cowardice.

"I should have stood with him against a censorious world, and aided him to bear his heavy burdens. Instead of doing so I have sought refuge in flight and concealment. Alas, that such a course has no longer any motive!

"My father was broken down by his prison life and his acute sense of disgrace. At its close he was ill, and lay at the point of death; but he recovered, and his character, as I have heard, was changed. He had been impetuous, exacting, self-indulgent. He became patient, self-denying, and, above all, conscientious to the last degree. He returned to his home, and added to the completed sentence of the law a lifetime of voluntary expiation. He was once more successful. Commencing at the lowest round of the ladder, he rose to prominence; but it is a prominence clouded by a stigma which the lapse of time has not effaced. For years his life was a martyrdom. He endured scoffs and insults, but with unflinching resolution, and lived them down. He has relieved much suffering and caused none, and his honesty is a proverb. He won back his commercial standing, but never that which opened freely to us the avenues of social life. Such is my story.

"Now you know all. You know the lie my life has been to avoid the shame of the disclosure which I have at last been forced to make to you. I said to myself, 'The guilt was not mine, and I will not bear its punishment.' I tried to escape the decree of an inevitable destiny. Never was I so wholly impressed with the necessity of concealment as when I first knew you and began to cherish my illusive hopes. I knew that so proud a family as yours could not stoop, not merely to one of less station and fortune, but to one on a lower than any social plane,—that of crime. I tried to persuade myself at times that the importance of this secret was created by a morbid imagination; that the world, if it knew, would not visit ignominy upon me who was innocent. I feared I had lost the faculty of judging. But how well I judged appeared in your

remorseless words upon the hill-side of Torri. Fate seemed on that day to bring the currents of our lives to the point of contact, only to sweep them forever apart.

"I bid you with this a final farewell. In doing so, in spite of the humiliation and disappointment in which I am involved, I can not bring myself to say that if our relations were to be lived over again I should act differently. The hours I spent with you were almost the only happy hours of my life. Had I not deceived you I should not have known them. The prospect of your love seemed to me something subtle and exquisite beyond words. I will not say that I could ever have let the dictates of duty weigh for a moment against it.

"I beg that you will not suffer yourself to be annoyed at this. It is a presumption that is wholly of the past. Henceforth I can occupy no place in your thoughts, nor do I deserve to do so. As for me, I can never forget you. I shall live in the hope that, though unseen and unheard of, it may be my fortune to be able to add some fragment of happiness to the full share which I trust is always in store for you."

## XVI.

## A CORROBORATION.

**D**ETMOLD'S letter reached Alice at Geneva, after a roundabout transit of some three weeks. It was successively forwarded to and detained a little at each of the points where she had paused in her journey. Her party had gone to Trieste from Venice, and afterwards into the Tyrol.

Miss Lonsdale brought the missive, among others, from the bureau of the hotel, with a sprightly air: "A love-letter, my dear!"

"Oh, no, indeed; nobody likes me well enough to take so much trouble."

"Ah, I fear the fault is with you. We must make you return somebody's liking. I want you to marry, dear," she said, caressingly.

"Why?"

"You will be happier."

Alice was agitated and much reassured at the

sight of the familiar handwriting. She read and re-read the letter, and let it fall with supine hands into her lap,— lost in reverie. Sad as was the recital, it was an infinite relief from the suspicions with which she had been troubled. It was a story of frailty atoned for by a heroic expiation. As to Detmold himself, he was involved in nothing but a conventional disgrace ; he, at least, had committed no crime. The death of Castelbarco and this history were almost her first initiation into an acquaintance with the profounder afflictions. She was deeply impressed. She asked herself, as gravely as had Detmold, why these other lives were somber and full of tumultuous passion while her own had been all brightness and unbroken calm. Detmold seemed full of generous instincts, and far more worthy of happiness than herself. She found nothing culpable in him except his concealment, his want of ingenuousness in this single matter. The blame she should have visited upon him for it was disarmed by his vehement devotion to herself. It was to an orderly, routine demonstration of regard preceding marriage, as has been said, that Alice had been accustomed to look forward. She had even shrunk a little from the idea of any excessive admiration, through a want of confidence in her own merits, an apprehension of the un-

pleasantness of the time when it should be disillusioned in the future. But she found it, in spite of herself, strangely sweet. This extravagance of sentiment, this despair, this reckless affection, fascinated her.

Yet neither by this letter nor by any other considerations which she had in the mean time entertained was the general conclusion at which she had arrived, at the moment of the disclosure, overthrown, namely, that all was at an end between them. She took it, somehow, for granted that the revelation that had been made separated them, irrespective of any power of hers to help it. The pride of her family, her dependence upon them, the necessity of doing as the world does,—all the circumstances of her situation, and even the self-abasement of Detmold, which would make it useless to attempt to convey to him any happiness unless he were first raised in his own esteem, seemed to make a union impossible.

It would hardly be fair upon this to condemn Alice as selfish and heartless. She was by nature distrustful of romantic sentiment, and she was not at this moment nor at any former stage of the affair possessed by a passion corresponding to that of Detmold,—reckless of consequences. It was still subject to calculation and control. The conviction that it must be laid aside could

cause pangs of regret and seasons of melancholy, but it had in it nothing of despair.

For the first time in any similar matter — she could not say why — Alice took the letter to her father instead of to her mother of extensive experience and powers of management. She found him in his room, which commanded the lake, and the new-born Rhone, where it is spanned by the broad and handsome iron bridge. Before giving him the writing she recounted briefly the scene at the fête, the proposal of Castelbarco, and the accusation hurled forth by him in his jealous rage, which had caused Detmold such extreme distress.

“ Ah, conspirator! You have acquired a true Italian genius for intrigue. Why did you tell us nothing of this while we were wondering what had become of Mr. Detmold when he disappeared so mysteriously?”

“ The subject was full of painful associations. I did not wish to speak of it. Besides, I could not have done so without giving greater publicity to those cruel statements.”

“ Well, let us see this famous letter.”

As his eye followed down its pages in a quick perusal, he uttered an exclamation of surprise and looked strangely at Alice. Her back was towards him. She stood at the window looking

meditatively across at the little steamers, the clustered buildings climbing to the square towers of the cathedral, the long ridge of the Grand Saleve behind them, and the snowy peak of Mont Blanc, hulk down, and less than some petty hillock of the neighborhood, in its leagues of distance.

“What is it, papa?”

He did not reply, but went on reading to the end, and even, it would seem, for a considerable time after, walking slowly up and down with the letter held up before him. He made it a pretext to gain time to collect his thoughts. Then he sat down and called Alice to him.

“Come and sit by me, my daughter.”

Between this rugged, keen man of business, weighted with formidable cares, and this pretty woman of twenty-seven, there remained an affectionate intercourse that had endured from the time she was a child. He placed his arm about her. She nestled by him, and brushed his hair a little back, critically. She said, “You are getting quite gray, but it is going to be very becoming.”

“I do not know, my daughter, how to proceed in a matter which fills me with an astonishment amounting to awe. There is a coincidence here that bears the aspect of a providential interposition. I shall first ask you to tell me something.

Are you willing to say whether you were very much attached to this young man who is involved in so sad a history?"

"Well, papa," replied the young lady, with a sweet color stealing into her face, and engaging both hands with a superfluity of pains in some slight adjustment of the lapel of his coat, "I feel very sorry for him, you know, and I—we have been great friends—and he likes me. *I think* he does, you know, papa."

"It would appear so from some of his expressions," said the man of business, dryly. "I know nothing of what has passed between you," he went on. "I am perhaps to blame for my remissness, but I leave such things to your mother, who has your best interests at heart, and who is so amply competent to deal with them. I will say that what I have seen of Detmold leads me to esteem him. I have heard a good character of him, too, from others at Lakeport who know him in his business relations. He has both talent and industry, and I should judge would succeed. In the letter he speaks of his hopes,—his former hopes, and so on. Had he ever asked you to marry him?"

"Why, yes, papa—a good while ago, at Paris, before you came; and I declined—and he was very sorry—and then, afterwards, I came to

know him better, and he—we—became very good friends."

"And you had thought, perhaps, that you might some time like him well enough to be his?"

Alice said, softly, resting her head against his shoulder, "Yes, papa, if it pleased you."

"Then, Alice, what I ought to say to you must not be longer withheld. What if I should tell you that I know something already of the strange story contained in this letter? I know it to be true. The name of Detmold has more than once brought back reminiscences of my own, but I never for an instant imagined there could be a connection between this young man and a Detmold of long ago who was the partner of my ill-fated friend James Belford. Fortunately, perhaps, for his peace, I did not even know that he was from the West. Did he not give himself out as coming from New York?"

"Not directly; but I think he was willing to have it understood so, since he had spent some years there, engaged in studies, before coming to Lakeport. If the mistake was made he did not gainsay it."

"James Belford was once my dearest friend. We were playmates and schoolmates, and until he went to seek his fortune at the West, inseparable. There was nothing he would not have

done for me, nor I for him. He was unfortunate in his struggle with the world—but you know the story—criminal. When I met him by chance in the great metropolis, after his departure from the scene of his fall, he was living miserably, under an assumed name. He died young and in poverty. His heart-broken wife did not long survive him.”

He paused and took one of the pretty hands of Alice caressingly in both his own.

“ What I am about to tell you, my dear girl,” he continued, “ will, I fear, at first distress you ; but, I trust, only for a moment. It will be succeeded and recompensed, as I hope, by lasting content. In any case I can not doubt of my duty to speak. We are humble instruments in the hands of Providence, for some strange purpose to which we seem called upon to adjust ourselves. Alice, you know that you are not really my daughter,—my own daughter.”

“ Yes,” said Alice, tremulously, “ I know.”

“ You are”—

“ I am Alice Leland, whom you adopted. I owe all that I have, and a thousand times more than I can ever hope to repay, to the kindness of the most generous of protectors.”

“ No,” said Mr. Starfield, deeply affected, “ you are not even Alice Leland. You are Alice

Belford,—the daughter of my unhappy friend who was the partner of the elder Detmold.”

“Oh, papa, *papa!*”

Alice clutched his arm with a little spasm. It was as if she had been ruthlessly torn from her pleasant life and cast adrift upon a dark and chilling stream. The shadow of crime descended upon her. She was overcome by a great sense of isolation.

“I was with him at the end. He did not ask it, but he looked it—and when your mother died I took you with me.”

“Why did I never know anything of this before?” she said, sobbing softly.

“Nothing was to be gained by it. Why should I have made you unhappy without cause? I would even have preferred, if it were possible, that you should never know yourself as other than my child. With me any distinction that there once was between you and mine was long since obliterated. Under no ordinary circumstances would I have made to you this revelation. I seem to have been driven to it by a remarkable fatality of events, and also—have I erroneously inferred it?—by a regard for your own more complete happiness in the future.”

“It makes me feel so lonely.”

In her pre-occupation with this sudden en-

tanglement in the mazes of crime and suffering, at which, from the outside, as if from a different plane of being, she had vaguely wondered, its contingent bearings were for the moment lost sight of. Mr. Starfield suffered the current of her reflections to flow unchecked. He feared that his perception of an ordained mysterious attraction between Alice and Detmold, to bring them together from afar, to compensate by the harmony of their union the sin and bitterness in the association of their fathers, had been premature. A match with Detmold, although he knew nothing to his disadvantage, and would not at any time have opposed the decidedly expressed wishes of Alice, would not under ordinary circumstances have met his views of what was most desirable. If, after all, it was not to be, of which, as it seemed, there was a possibility, a slight sensation of relief would have mingled with his feelings. But then the disclosures of this interview were to be regretted, since they must have a permanently depressing effect upon Alice's mind, with none of the compensating advantages which he had expected. Upon the whole, he was excessively puzzled.

"Try not to be cast down, dear Alice," said he. "You are still our daughter, and shall never lack our tenderest care. You shall not be

lonely. Everything that has been pleasant to you shall encompass you still. What I have told you no other shall ever know. As to your inclinations towards Detmold, your plans in the future, whatever they may be,—whatever seems good to you,—shall receive our sanction and approval."

This mention brought back to Alice all that she had momentarily forgotten. She was joined to Detmold by an inscrutable decree. She rested with him under the shadow of his ancestral disgrace. It was now hers also. It seemed to join their destinies indissolubly. His features arose before her mentally as he had so often conjured up hers. She would have wished to banish their sad and dejected aspect. His sensitive and noble character, the history in which he was so lamentably, if blamelessly, involved, his foolish worship of herself, filled her with ineffable tenderness.

The distress into which she had at first been plunged gave way, in contemplating the possibilities of the future, to a sweet sense of dignity. A nobility of spirit that had hitherto for the most part lain dormant was awakened. The mission of the comforter—dearest and most fitting to woman—was open to her. She could now look forward with eagerness to being the helpmeet of her husband, to dissipating his moods

of depression, to cheering him on in his struggle with the world. She saw herself appointed, as she thought, in pursuance of a far-reaching plan, to administer the concluding rites of a long expiation. Doubtless the period of sorrow was near its end. But she said: "I know he must hate me now, I was so cold and unfeeling."

There was another misgiving. He had looked up to her as the embodiment of perfections, social as well as all others. Her station and manner of life were possibly a tangible factor in his admiration. Now that she was touched with the stigma from the contact of which he had shrunk so fearfully,—now that she too was of an inglorious parentage and dependent upon the bounty of her good friends, would there be no change in him? It remained to be seen.

The interview was long and tender. Alice obtained, although Mr. Starfield would have avoided it, the detailed story of her family. She cried over it, and he reiterated again and again his assurances of affection and continued interest. At its conclusion she gave herself up to the work of answering Detmold's letter. Perhaps something of its purport may be divined, but it was not received for many a long day after. It strayed about from place to place, and reached him at last covered with postmarks and strange

indorsements, too late to have any bearing upon the events of this narrative.

Meanwhile Detmold, awaiting at Trasimene an answer — though it should be a cold and formal one — that never came, found in this neglect an unmistakable assurance of hardness and contempt. A fit of indignation took him. He fell into a rage with the injustice of destiny, as though it were now for the first time that he discovered it. As if he had natural rights which Providence could infringe upon, he set himself to complain bitterly of his injuries. Has not every man his own life to live? Has he not the consequences of his own sins and follies and omissions? — and heavy enough they are. Why should the guilt of any other — relative, parent, it mattered not who or how near — be suffered to work attainder upon him? When suggestions of his early religious training came to him, and tried to whisper resignation in the well-worn maxims with which he had once been content, he said savagely, "No, all is not for the best; all is for the worst."

His anger did not spare Alice. She too should have recognized this injustice. She should have been considerate and noble; but instead she lent herself to be the most cruel minister of the Moloch of destiny which punishes the innocent for the guilty.

This indignation served as a tonic. It braced up his energies, — with a cynical, malignant tenseness, it is true, but yet so effectually as to render him again useful to himself. He was weary of moping and longed for action. He came down from his hill city to the great artery, and was absorbed again into the fervid circulation of the world he had left. He betook himself to Venice. For Verona, the dim, rich city of his early admiration, he conceived an aversion amounting to loathing. He could not bear to set foot in it. He caused his effects, lying since his departure in his empty chamber at the Grazzini palace, to be forwarded to him.

He went about his work with a kind of ferocity. He made his drawings with quick, nervous strokes, stopping little to delight in the delicious melting of colors, or to muse over the memories of the past. What cared he for Doges and Councilors of Ten, the splendid state of the grandees of painting; for hapless queens of Cyprus, or captives in the dungeons of ducal prisons, for ruined hopes of the remote past, when his own were so sharp and real and present? He floated in a black, steel-prowed gondola up the vistas of the narrower water-ways and among the stately structures of the Grand Canal, too often given over to common uses. He noted how sig-

nally the effect of dignity and decorum in life is bound up with the plebeian virtues of neatness and scrupulous attention. Without them, palaces incrusted with ornaments could be even squalid. In a remote quarter of dilapidated Murano there was one that especially pleased him. It was of the best age, of red brick and precious marbles, but sordid clothing and utensils swung from its balconies and lofty portal. Coarse freights of hay and wood were unloaded at the water staircase and piled in the frescoed chambers. The domicile of his own existence, he said, fantastically in search of analogies, was similar—despoiled of the fair manner of life that should have graced it, and degraded to ignoble uses.

He passed, now and then, a private gondola, with oarsmen in white having broad silk hat-bands and scarfs of scarlet and yellow, with a Venetian dame within, reading or languidly waving her fan. In front of his apartment on the Riva Schiavoni lay always some fishing-boats with colored sails and painted belts of ornament. From his window at night he could see the moonlight streaming over the lagoons. When he sometimes awoke, far into the morning, to hear from a passing gondola voices singing to the music of a guitar, the faded city became for a moment the Venice of imagination.

The August heat was parching, but he swam every day at the Lido or the floating baths, and managed to endure it. At one of these places he met the artist Gilderoy, who was still endeavoring to make sail upon his phantom ships of Tarshish, and heard from him of the death of Castelbarco. It was the first circumstance that aroused him from the useless contemplation of himself.

## XVII.

### THE CHANCES OF AN ALPINE PASS.

HE death of Castelbarco made a profound but not very lasting impression upon Hyson. He had not lost an intimate friend, and no long-established trains of habit were broken. He assisted at the formal obsequies at Verona. There were in public no excessive manifestations of grief on the part of either of the parents. Perhaps there was a measure of consolation in the coming to the front of the remaining son, the student from Padua. He was a sagacious, proud young man, and, to his mother's view, at least, all that Antonio was not.

Our light-hearted friend mused, as the custom is in the face of such afflictions, upon the transitoriness of human affairs. How easily it might have been he instead of Castelbarco, who was tucked away so quietly underground, with the world moving on just as usual above him! He

speculated upon the various theories he knew of concerning that great hereafter in which, if it were indeed his own case, he should now be playing some misty sort of a part. He determined to give the whole matter his fullest consideration at some future time. At present it was baffling, and by degrees he dropped it.

No word of Detmold had yet been received except a brief note at his lodgings, with directions about the care of his effects. Hyson concluded that he felt lonely, and made up his mind to go and take a vacation in Switzerland, where he knew he should fall in with acquaintances. He fell in almost immediately with a very agreeable acquaintance. It was Emilia. He met her at Stresa. She had joined her Milan master and his wife, who were continuing the instruction of a portion of their class during the vacation at this pretty port on Lake Maggiore. He hung about for a few days, and saw as much of the attractive young girl as he could under a strict though somewhat overtaxed supervision.

He walked with her on the veranda of a hotel which looked off upon the Borromean Islands, the blue water, and bluer mountains. There are villas with white walls and red roofs. Over the portal of one of them is a motto of Horace, from the verse in which he inscribes his moderate

wishes: "Hoc erat in votis." On the beach are women washing, under the striped awnings that shade their roller platforms. "This is the panorama business," he said, "without any discount."

They spoke of the terrible scene they had lately witnessed together. Emilia shuddered with something of her original terror, and prayed fervently that she might ever be protected from another such sight. Hyson ingratiated himself with the professor by complimenting his English. As an American he was perhaps accorded a little more freedom than had he been of another nationality. He was invited to join in an evening rowing party. Emilia, with her shapely head thrown back, under the white radiance of the moon, sang songs of surpassing sweetness. The pretty and ingenuous young girl had made a winning impression upon him. He preferred her to a number of society belles he could have named from his wide acquaintance. She manifested a frank liking for him, also, and did not affect to conceal her regret when he was going away. From this time he began to send her back as mementoes little articles picked up in his travels. She responded in occasional notes of thanks quaintly expressed.

Hyson flitted from place to place. He saw the Starfields at Geneva and learned the date when

they were going to make an excursion through the Bernese Oberland. Towards the time, he set out thither himself from the side of Lucerne. One evening he walked into the hotel at the Baths of Rosenlaui, and found Detmold sitting there, with a careworn expression.

“*Hal-lo, long-lost stranger!*” said he in astonishment. Then, more gayly, “ You have a pretty account to give of yourself, I promise you.”

His idea was that they should sit down at once to dinner and have a square, old-fashioned talk. But Detmold was not found solicitous for an old-fashioned talk, or scarcely for talk of any kind. He had supposed, in fact, that his story in his absence would be bandied about from one to another. It would come to Hyson as well as the rest, and from him, too, he should meet with coldness and disdain. That it did not prove so at present disconcerted him; but he had no fliprant theory ready to account for his movements, and he took refuge in reserve. He heard Hyson’s account of the tragic fate of Castelbarco, and speculations as to whether it could have been remorse or some other trouble that had caused his singular conduct, with little comment. When he learned that the Starfields were possibly to be encountered on this very route, he had an impulse

to go back. Then he determined not to be turned out of his course. She had made him all the trouble she was going to. He supposed one had a right to travel on a public highway. He told Hyson he was going into Germany, and should probably sail for home before a great while. The latter desisted from inquiries, which he saw were unwelcome. During their next day's journey together along the zigzag foot-path of this delightful region, he confined himself to general topics or his own affairs.

Two days later the pair might have been discovered detained by stress of weather at the Little Scheideck. It is a resting point on the narrow ridge between the Jungfrau and Lauberhorn, and commands a glorious backward view over the valley of Grindelwald. It had rained and snowed for nearly forty-eight hours. Fogs, of the consistency of locomotive smoke, puffed against the glass, and twirled heavily among the grass blades in the few feet of foreground, which at other moments a sunbeam touched with a furtive, yellow radiance. The paths were slippery from melting snow mingling with their clay. In the intermissions of an icy wind the air was tepid as on a day of January thaw in New England. The fires smoked and added to the dis-

comfort of Hyson, already oppressed for lack of his out-of-door exercise. Detmold, instead of being a relief to him, remained mostly by himself, reading, and gave him a sense of being disagreeably rebuffed. The only other travelers confined with him were a French-speaking artist from Geneva, and a gray-bearded English botanist, as garrulous as Polonius. The painter was a sufficient adept in Alpine weather to take his delay philosophically. The botanist was glad of it as an opportunity to put his collections in order.

“ You have probably seen my communication, in the last Swiss Times, using up ‘ Veritas,’ ” said the botanist, as the young man paused a moment beside him in his uneasy wandering up and down.

“ Was that yours ? ” he exclaimed, affecting an intense interest as a distraction, though he knew nothing of Veritas, and almost as little of the Swiss Times.

“ Yes, the impudence of him ! To deny that *Epimedium Alpinum* is found in England ! I can bring him to a spot in Cumberland where it is to be had in cart-loads. But he is an ignorant dog. I have had a tussle with him before, if it be the fellow I think it is. He claimed that *Cyperus fuscus* is not an annual.”

“ Heavens ! no ? ” said Hyson.

“He did.”

But his listener, already bored, moved on to the window. He brought his field glass. The glittering Jungfrau showed through momentary displacements of the mists, as if they were riven by silvery lightnings.

“There are compensations,” said the painter good-naturedly, joining him; “for instance, we have no dust.”

Towards four o’clock the weather partially cleared. The flowers, the verdure, the red châlets, the glaciers and falling cataract of the valley, showed with tender freshness. The slopes close at hand rose spotless white, the stains and débris of their mighty erosions hidden by the new-fallen snow.

Travelers were seen coming up from the side of Lauterbrunnen. There were a lady and gentleman on horseback, and a guide in dirt-colored clothes trudged heavily with his shoes full of water, leading the lady’s horse.

“Now things will be decently lively,” said Hyson, as he watched their approach. They were the arrivals he had been expecting,—Alice and her father. He hurried down to welcome them.

There was mud upon the young lady’s small boots, and the blue cloak with black frogs in

which she was enveloped was very wet. It had a hood, drawn over the head during the journey, to the detriment of the feather of her hat, but now lowered and forming a cowl-like background to her charming face. There were beads of moisture in the braids of her hair, and its light filaments, that usually floated, hung limp upon her damp but rosy cheeks.

“Oh, we *never* had such a soaking in our lives!” said she. “Please do not look at us till we go and lay aside our bathing costumes.”

They were shaking and stamping off the wet, and the host was offering his hospitalities. Alice was giving little renovating taps with a thumb and forefinger to the ill-used feather. Detmold came in. He had been trying to snatch a few moments’ exercise on the other side of the plateau, with an umbrella and overshoes. He had seen the horses led away, but had no suspicion who had arrived. It was preposterous to think of her being out in such weather, and by another day he would be over the pass.

His eye rested for a second upon the group with the cursory glance one gives to strangers, then flashed with astonished recognition. He had not considered what he should do if he met her. Indeed, it had hardly appeared that he should ever meet her again, all being irremediably

over; even to their ever seeing or hearing of each other. He took off his hat distantly, and was going to pass by. But Mr. Starfield stepped forward and cordially gave him his hand. Alice offered hers. Their eyes met. His were impulsive; in hers there almost seemed something like reproach,—but that was incredible.

“We were yawning ourselves to death,” said Hyson. “You have no idea what a godsend you are.”

“So you have been here for some time. I thought that perhaps Mr. Detmold had just arrived.” She turned kindly to him. “Then you escaped this wretched storm?”

“Not entirely,” he answered. “It overtook us with some severity before we reached here,—the evening before last.”

“We overtook *it*, rather, as I think,” said Hyson. “These Alpine storms are very local. This one, probably, belongs on the mountain and nowhere else. Perhaps we could walk out of it if we chose, just as we walked into it.”

“It belongs to Lauterbrunnen at least, as we can bear witness,” said Aliee. “It has rained there for three days. We were so tired of waiting that we determined to come to-day, anyhow. The guides said it was likely to clear up, and it really was not very bad at starting.”

“ Well, it has, you see.”

“ Oh, yes, so opportunely,—just as we were under cover and out of it ! ”

When Alice came down, after half an hour's delay, in dry garments, the two young men were sitting at one end of a long dining-table, which served between meals for miscellaneous purposes. At the other end the cloth was being laid. Her dress was of a substantial kind calculated for rough usage, but not entirely free from certain coquettices. Her hair was now smooth. She wore little golden ear-rings in the shape of bells. Perhaps across the colossal purpose of Detmold to keep his thoughts austereley free of her may have come a fancy of the bleak stone hostelry, inclosing this charming figure, as a sturdy weather-beaten jewel-case. She entered hesitatingly. Hyson precipitated himself to place a chair for her.

The conversation went on chiefly between those two. Detmold replied in scarcely more than monosyllables to the overtures in his direction. How could she come there and talk flip-pant trifles to him ! Were they going to sit and play with straws in the belt devastated by a tornado ? He looked at her with a sense of immeasurable distance. The orbit in which she moved henceforth seemed almost a subject for telescopic researches, like that of a planet.

At dinner the discourse was confined to neutral topics. Reminiscences of all kinds were avoided, even by Hyson, who now had clearly defined suspicions. Still he hardly ventured the observation on the Alpine weather that it was like lovers and love-making.

“There is altogether too much coyness and moping,” said he, “when a little effusion is the thing most in demand, and a reckless prodigality of attentions when one is too disgusted to care anything about them.”

Alice was full of animation. Detmold confessed, with miserable pangs, that she had never been more seductive. She told of their adventures coming up the mountain. They had stopped in a chalet to get warm. The fire was of green sticks, and made her cough. There was a little child there with a marmotte, she said. “I made her sing me a song, and I was afraid she would hug the poor little animal to death, in her embarrassment. How did it go? Let me see — Ah — ah — a —

‘Ah! voulez-vous voir la marmotte,  
La marmotte en vie?  
Ah, donnez quelque chose à Javotte  
Pour sa marmotte en vie.’”

Detmold found himself drawn into the conversation in spite of himself. It was managed with

a delicate persistency. He was deferred to and appealed to in such ways that he could not have avoided it without incivility. The eyes of Alice were turned to him with an appearance of interest that was of course an optical illusion. Naturally all this was but a polite effort to conceal for the moment the deep impression which the revelations concerning him had made.

At the conclusion of the repast the company dispersed variously. Hyson thought of making a purchase from the good-natured painter, and went to examine his portfolios to see what it should be. Mr. Starfield allowed himself to be captured by the loquacious naturalist. Whether by accident or design, ample opportunities were open to Detmold to be alone with Alice. He took no advantage of them, but went and stood by the window in a small reception room whither the botanist and his listener had repaired, and where a merry party of German tourists — later arrivals — were waiting to be summoned to a supplementary meal.

The sun was setting coldly. There were again dashes of rain against the panes. The wind sighed as drearily about the corners of the rugged building that evening of August as in late November at Lakeport. The chattering tourists flocked away, at a signal, to their dinner.

“The landlord has some fossil specimens illustrating this very point,” said the naturalist. “Shall we step and see them for a moment?” and he carried off his listener, leaving Detmold alone. His pain, dulled by time and absence, was renewed in something like its original intensity. This useless meeting, he reflected, was all that was needed to exhaust upon him every resource of a malicious fate. Presently there was a light rustle, and turning he saw Alice.

“Pardon,” said she, “I was looking for papa. I thought I heard him talking here.”

“He was here a moment ago, and I think meant to return.”

“I hope I do not intrude. I will wait for him. I see you are looking at the weather. Shall we have more rain to-morrow?”

“I am a poor weather prophet,” said he, making way for her at the window, sorely puzzled.

*Could* it be, now, that she was good after all, capable of estimating his case with a measure of sympathy? But no, or she would have written. It is but a few days from Trasimene to Geneva; there had been the fullest allowance for delays. No; this was but her whim, to amuse herself in the absence of a more engrossing occupation. In this way he set up between himself and every favorable suggestion the morbid sensitiveness

which, instead of any actual maltreatment by the world, had been his bane through life.

“ Do you not think it a rather strange coincidence that we should arrive here from opposite directions almost at the same time? ” she began.

“ It seems somewhat so, ” he replied stiffly.

It was evident that there was to be, by her desire, some sort of an explanation. He did not wish for any. No explanation except such a one as he had persuaded himself was hopelessly out of the question, namely, that she loved him and might still be his, could be of any avail.

They looked out upon the dismal prospect in silence. Detmold thought of that idyllic afternoon upon the hill-side at Torri. Far greater than the dissimilarity of the two scenes was the difference between the happy future then seeming to open before him and that he now darkly contemplated. The interview, with such a disposition on one side, did not progress easily.

“ This mountaineering seems to me very severe, ” she ventured again. “ And you, how do you stand it? Do you never take cold? ” It was said almost caressingly, as though it were of consequence whether he did or not. What deliberate torture! He had an impulse to go away and leave her standing there. But he said, No, he was used to knocking about. The elements inconvenienced him very little.

"It was the greatest surprise, you know, to find you here," she persevered, struggling with a consciousness of excessive inaneness.

"I am not going to remain. I was not intending to. I shall go down the mountain in the morning."

"Oh, I did not mean that we were not glad to see you. I am sure you did not think I meant that. Only — we — did not know where you were."

"I — wrote a letter from Trasimene," he replied, huskily. The explanation had begun. In what would it end?

"Yes, we — papa — that is, I received your letter. It was much delayed. I replied to it at once."

"You replied? But no reply ever reached me."

His reserve was beginning to be thawed by wonder and dimly suggested possibilities. He debated how to ask her what had been its purport.

"You would not exactly care to — You probably don't entirely recollect just what" —

"Why, certainly. I said, you know, that — Of course the precise words — I think I have a copy among my baggage somewhere. It got blotted just after it was finished, and I happened

to keep it. I will go and get it. I would like to have you see — I am so sorry you did not get it, because you must have thought" — And she went away in search of it.

It did not seem to be a work of difficulty. No sooner had she reached her chamber than she held up her dainty skirt with one hand, felt in a pocket in the folds of it, and produced it. She read it, straightened a cheap lithograph on the wall, drummed on the bureau, read it again, smoothed her hair, opened and shut her satchel twice, rang the bell, and sent the missive down by a servant. Then she went and listened with rapt attention to the tiresome botanist, and avoided the place where Detmold was until she was obliged to accompany her father and other people thither.

It was not much of a letter, but if you had brought all the most treasured manuscripts of Christendom to Detmold to exchange for it you would have had them left on your hands. It was dated Geneva, the 8th of August. It read : —

DEAR MR. DETMOLD, — Your letter of July 16th has only just been received, having been forwarded from place to place, owing to my frequent changes of address. I regret the delay so much, as my apparent neglect to reply must have seemed very strange. I am extremely pained by the tone of unhappiness that pervades it. I do not think it is warranted by the facts. I

am sure that there is nothing in them to reflect discredit upon you personally, if all were known. I think this would be the opinion of all those, at least, whose opinions are of any value. Circumstances have happened quite recently to make the story of a special interest to me even apart from your connection with it.

[This reference was all she permitted herself to the revelation of her parentage. It was a compromise between an impulse to relate the whole and a decision to await the opportunity of a meeting, if it should then seem desirable. Detmold read and re-read the sentence without arriving at any solution of its meaning.]

We are shortly to start for a little trip over the Wengern Alp, but our address is always kept at the bank in the Petite Corraterie. Do you not find Central Italy very warm in summer? Papa has read your letter, and his views coincide with mine. The respect and esteem he has entertained for you are not diminished. Sincerely your friend,

ALICE STARFIELD.

Detmold was now burning to speak to her; but, though sending him an occasional glance, which was not forbidding, across the room, she gave him no opportunity. His moroseness gave place to an immoderate enthusiasm. He made an extraordinary virtue of her action in this matter. She was all of generous and noble in nature that he had ever dreamed. Yes, it was proved. But Alice, having been forced by his obduracy to go so far,—lengths of which she would not have believed herself capable,—was

afflicted with trepidation. In the pretty game of flight and chase which love is, it was she who was again the fugitive.

The company were invited to the dining-room ; a clever German gentleman had volunteered to amuse them with impersonations. They were moving thither in a body, Alice with the rest. But Detmold, lingering, managed to intercept her, and asked for a word.

“ But — this is to be very entertaining. The ladies say he is a real genius. We ought not to miss it.”

“ A moment — just a moment, Miss Alice.”

“ Well — but ” —

“ I want to say what a very kind letter it is. I thought you were coming back. I have read it twenty times.”

“ It is not kind ; it is only just.”

“ And you have neither the disdain nor fear of me I dreaded ? ”

“ Why, of course not ! ”

“ Stay — yet a moment. Your letter was perhaps just, but it was also noble. It was worthy of you. I know,” he continued, hesitatingly, “ that I ought to be satisfied with justice, and that I am infatuated to think of more. But because I am infatuated, because I find in it a renewed pretext for presumption, because justice and es-

teem and friendship are of scarcely more worth to me than aversion without — your love, I am going on to ask for it once more, to ask if it may not be possible that this great happiness is yet in store for me.”

He turned towards her, and his face was full of tenderness.

She cast her eyes down, and, with a charming pretense of pouting and still making a movement to go, said, in a voice that assumed an injured tone, “I am sure, I do not think one ought to make *all* the advances. I”—

But even while she hesitated and complained her lover put his arm about her, and it was completed. Her head rested against his shoulder with a delicious yielding. The countless invisible filaments of attraction that had floated between them were knit in this moment and inter-twisted beyond the possibility of rupture.

“What an insufferable idiot I was!” he exclaimed, raising both her hands to his lips. “I could knock my head against the wall. You were actually making love to *me*, and I repulsed you.”

“What must you think of me?” she returned.

“Nobody was ever lifted before from such distress to such a happiness,” said Detmold. “I can not credit that after it all I am really to have so sweet and noble a wife.”

The words revived a memory that had been strangely forgotten in the agitation of these moments. She disengaged herself with an earnest, even sad demeanor.

“ Why did I not tell you,” she said, “ what was already upon my tongue? It is I who have a secret now, and perhaps it is your turn to shrink from me. But you must hear it. I too have an inherited disgrace. It is much heavier than yours, because it was never relieved by any such admirable atonement.”

“ Ah! you are trying to imagine something to keep me in countenance; but it is not necessary. Once I know that you love me, you shall see how self-satisfied I am going to be.”

“ No, really and truly,” protested Alice.

“ Well, then,—inherited disgrace? Come on — what next? The reputation of your family is spotless. How — But make me no confessions. You are what you are; what do I care for anything besides?”

“ My father was involved in guilt very similar to that of yours. It is what I referred to in my note. Did you know it?”

“ Your father? I do not understand. Is not Mr. Starfield your father? — one of the most upright of men?”

“ Only by virtue of his own goodness of heart. I am an adopted daughter. You knew that?”

“I recall that I had dimly heard it. But what does it matter? Do not distress yourself with vexatious reminiscences, I beg.”

“It does matter. Do you know who my father was? I myself had never learned until after the receipt of your letter. He was—James Belford, the partner in your father’s crime.”

“Oh, wonderful!” cried Detmold, his hands clasped in a sort of exaltation. “Now you are indeed mine. Now we are indeed united.”

He would have drawn her to him, but she still kept him gently at a little distance.

“Take care,” she said; “are you sure that you love me now—with nothing—after such a history? It is worse for a woman, you know.”

“You have everything,” said the young man, passionately. “You are perfect!”

## XVIII.

THE END.

 H, how joyful it is," concludes, in her most stirring work, a writer who ensnares our interest with apparitions and abductions and mortal combats, with pictures of virtue and vice as strongly contrasted as the Cimmerian dungeons and banqueting halls of light in which they are enacted, "to tell of happiness such as that of Valancourt and Emily ; to relate that, after suffering under the oppression of the vicious and the disdain of the weak, they were at length restored to each other, to the beloved landscapes of their country, to the securest felicity of this life ! Oh, useful may it be to have shown that though the vicious can sometimes pour afflictions upon the good, their power is transient and their punishment certain ; and that innocence, though oppressed by injustice, shall, supported by patience, finally triumph over misfortune ! "

Useful indeed ! But yet more useful would it be to show how the good might remain always and unalterably good, and deserve and be subjected to no inconveniences but those attributable to the machinations of the wicked. How simple were both life and books could they but be accurately summarized under the clear-cut moralities of the good Mrs. Radcliffe ! But it is not to draw attention to a novel proposition to insist a little more that the poison flower of unmitigated depravity is of rare growth ; and just as rare the white blossom of immaculate innocence. Inherited traits, social conventionalities, exposure to unavoidable contingencies, are in these days of comparative quiet, at least, the chief agencies through which destiny, overhanging like a vast atmosphere, exerts its pressure upon every square inch of human endeavor. It has not been deemed obligatory in this narrative to show the wicked exalted and the good cast down, nor indeed *vice versa*. The motives of both Detmold and Alice have been confessedly mixed ; and would it be just to esteem Castelbarco wholly a villain ? His ill-regulated passion, the misery of Detmold, the calm melancholy of Miss Lonsdale, seem hardly to need an explanation outside of the constitution of human affairs for which individuals are little responsible.

In spite of the view which would make nothing true to life but disappointment and a jangling of cross-purposes, it is not certain that it will be indefensible now, in the end, to trace to our personages a measure of the good fortune of Valancourt and Emily. Happiness, though rarer, is not less realistic than misery. It is perhaps the business of the romancer to seek out those instances in which it especially prevails, and to present them as a relief, a species of redress of grievances, from the more ordinary course of affairs. It does not remain to tell, therefore, that Detmold returns to Lakeport to struggle and despond over a renewal of an architectural practice that never was established, while his betrothed grows old and fades, and becomes set and finical in character, waiting for a success that may never come. Nor would a further indebtedness to the generous man to whom Alice already owed so much be tolerable.

It remains to tell that the agitating news of the death of Detmold's father was received soon after the events last narrated. He died and was buried with honor in the community where he had sinned and suffered. His estate was found to be of considerable value. A keen remorse mingled with Detmold's sorrow for his loss. His long abandonment of him, now that it was

too late to atone for it, seemed more than ever shameful. He accepted with some misgiving the fortune that made his union with Alice possible; she shared in his regrets. She had cherished a wish to do something for the declining years of a character which she looked upon as cast in a heroic mold.

Within a seemly time the wedding took place, at Geneva. It was the fancy of both to make their bridal tour to Verona. They alighted again at the Torre d'Oro al Gran Parigi, and visited all the familiar places. His apartment and the bridge where he had stood on that miserable night of the disclosure were not forgotten.

Oh, the strange sweetness to Detmold of those first days together! Was indeed this proud and flower-like beauty his at last? He recalled her as he had first known her, and at the time when there had seemed such an impassable gulf between them. A too vivid recollection could almost at moments cause a renewal of his old timidity before her.

She assumed little airs of proprietorship. She took an interest in his pronunciation of French, in his preferences of the table, in his dress. She said, "You must always brush your hair up a little in front. It is more in keeping with your style of forehead." Each time that she pro-

nounced his name, — Louis, — it was like a caress.

She had received the shadow upon her life very sweetly. It gave her gravity and insight. It developed latent, more precious qualities, as the beauty of shells and pebbles is developed by a wave that draws a darker margin around them on the sand. The ancestral disgrace, so shared, had nothing any longer chilly or forbidding. Perhaps it may rather have seemed to them like one of the rich planes of shadow in the piazzas of Verona, a spot of refuge in a too gairish sunlight.

Neither could look upon their union as an ordinary marriage. They saw in it the end of a mysterious cycle, the close of a long act of expiation, perhaps a sign that, in the great adjustment of values of good and evil, the guilt followed by such bitter consequences was made as if it had never been. Their fathers were associated together for ignominy ; they believed themselves given to each other for honor and happiness.

Is it, then, intended to present this young man, who has simply moped through life endeavoring to avoid an unpleasant situation, who has accomplished nothing, that we are apprised of, except to marry a beautiful wife who is presumably also an heiress, as an especially admirable person ?

He is presented simply for what he is ; there are both better and worse. If it were legitimate to try to arouse an interest in him for what he may be rather than for what he has been, it might be said as a favorable indication for his future that he cherishes a high ideal ; prosperity does not diminish his diligence or render him more easily content with his own achievements. The effect of continued unhappiness and straitened circumstances is not less dwarfing than that of unvaried ease. Detmold has had the broadening experience of both. It would seem that he is at least likely to rise to eminence in the profession he has chosen and exert an important influence upon his section.

The Paradise Valley is not yet irrigated in accordance with the views of its sanguine proprietor. It is found that private enterprise in California, as in Italy, must be preceded by a comprehensive system of public works. But any of us may note that interest in the subject is growing. A survey of the great central plain has been ordered, and reports printed, and his flowering meads and orchards, backed by a little Golconda, are by no means an improbability of the future. Meanwhile he has other projects, and does not lack for employment. Our friends at Lakeport often see him in his flying journeys between the East and the West.

"I fear we shall never have you married," Alice has said to him, smiling at some flippant reflection upon womankind.

"Do not despair," he has replied. "Wait until we observe how my little *prima donna* turns out."

"You still hear from *Emilia*, then?"

"She is coming to this country. She has lately sent me her picture."

"How does she look?"

"As pretty as red shoes."

